





THE
PHILOSOPHY OF PRIMARY BELIEFS.

AN
INTRODUCTION
TO THE
PHILOSOPHY
OF
PRIMARY BELIEFS.

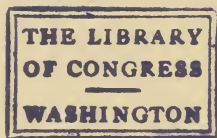
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P R E F A C E.

SOME years ago it occurred to me that a plain, popular epitome of Sir W. Hamilton's metaphysical theories might be found somewhat useful; the researches of this learned and vigorous thinker being confessedly of considerable value, and yet being extremely inaccessible, owing principally to his having scattered his best thoughts over stray foot-notes and fragmentary dissertations, instead of working them into a system.

In the course of drawing up such an epitome, that happened to me which no doubt frequently befalls the students of metaphysical books; I presently began to suspect I did not entirely agree on all points with my author. Mr. Mansel's application of Hamilton to theology made matters considerably worse. So that my epitome took by degrees a somewhat aggressive form, and has at last been developed into a sort of system of its own, which, such as it is, I venture to lay before the public.

Before doing so, it seems only fitting that I should briefly state what pretensions it has to present itself as something new. This may be most readily done, by explaining how far it follows, and at what point it begins to branch off from, Sir W. Hamilton's theory.

Although the term "primary belief," which figures somewhat too often in the following pages, is scarcely referred to, and is nowhere adopted as his own, in any of Hamilton's writings, yet the fundamental notion expressed by it enters very deeply into his system. In fact, if I may venture to say so, the great merit of this philosopher consists in his having steadily based his doctrine upon it.

When we have grown tired of questioning and doubting, and wish for something positive; when the destructiveness of our youthful intellect has worn itself out; everybody more or less strongly feels the necessity of some secure basis, some standing ground, upon which he may build his opinions, so that they may be steady, and consequently permanent. Such a standing ground was long ago discovered, and pointed out for metaphysicians, by a very original thinker, who was unfortunately a very verbose and wearisome writer, Dr. Thomas Reid. He gave it, however, an unfortunate name, in calling it Common Sense. He was still more unfortunate in making some very serious mistakes in the application of his own theory, by which it was discredited in the eyes of the philosophical public. For this and other reasons the philosophy of common sense fell into neglect. It was perhaps overshadowed by the, I will not say lustre, but fascinating obscurity, of the German metaphysicians.

Sir W. Hamilton found out this lost jewel, polished and reset it, and restored to it its reputation. He gave it a new name; and after him metaphysicians may learn to place the foundation of human knowledge upon the pri-

mary instincts, beliefs, or groundwork of belief, emplanted in the nature of man.

What is done in the earlier part of the present volume is little more than to arrange, systematize, and express in somewhat less technical language, Sir W. Hamilton's doctrine of Primary Beliefs.

The point of divergence comes later. Sir W. Hamilton's antipathy to the more recent growths of German philosophy seems to have led him into a course of speculation which, however original in outward appearance, was in truth, if I do not greatly err, nothing better than a partial relapse into the old sensationalism of the earlier followers of Locke. I refer to his "Philosophy of the Unconditioned," first made public in a contribution to the *Edinburgh Review*, and, unfortunately, the best known and most popular portion of his teaching. According to this theory, the mind of man is incapable of rising to any conception of the infinite, and so is to a great extent unfitted for any satisfactory study of Natural Theology. This result has been eagerly laid hold of by some theological writers, as appearing to enhance the importance of a revelation. I do not know that their eagerness was altogether judicious; as it is certainly possible that a religion, which satisfies the deepest requirements of human nature, may lose rather than gain from a demonstration that we can attach no weight to that internal evidence which is derivable from adaptation to those requirements. However, we are not at present dealing with theology; the question is only whether Hamilton's position is tenable.

Upon a careful examination of the reasoning by which

this position is supported, it will be found that the question turns on this—is there, or is there not, in the mind of man, a power to think that which it cannot imagine? The power to imagine is demonstrably limited to such objects as are concrete and finite. Is there, or is there not, a faculty of Pure Reason which transcends these limits?

It appears to me, for the reasons set forth in this volume, that there is such a faculty; and that, in the course of demonstrating its existence, and marking out the boundaries of its legitimate sphere of operation, we come upon arguments which serve to overthrow Hamilton's "Theory of the Unconditioned," and with it all the purely negative portions of the reasoning in Mr. Mansel's Bampton Lectures.

Accordingly, the later and principal portions of this volume are occupied with the task here designated; namely, the exhibiting of this faculty of pure reason which in various ways transcends or eludes the imagination. The first thing to be done is to establish its existence; the second, to mark out its bounds; and the third, to confront it with Hamilton and Mansel, and by this means to break loose, if we can, from that uncomfortable (and, I think, dangerous) philosophy, which undertakes to make us Christians by first making us thorough-going sceptics.

It is not for me to estimate the originality or importance of the theory thus founded on the distinction between imagining or picturing and pure thinking. It is very likely that the Germans, who are so far in advance of us as metaphysicians, have already anticipated much of what is

here written. If they have, it is none the less necessary that the theory should be worked out in an English fashion, and so as to be intelligible for English students. That the distinction is new to English metaphysics, may at any rate be gathered from the fact that it has been ignored, or nearly so, by Sir W. Hamilton, and totally unnoticed by Mr. Mansel. It is, however, a question of much less importance whether it is new, than whether it is sound.

In the Conclusion to this volume, I have ventured upon some observations as to the application of the Philosophy of Primary Beliefs to certain rudimentary questions in theology. This course has been resolved on, partly to remove objections which might lurk in the mind of a reader, but principally because I think it can be shown, and is important to show, that the reception of this philosophy not only is not incompatible with, but leads naturally to, the reception of the Christian religion.

WALLASEY, NEAR LIVERPOOL,
December, 1864.

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ERRATA.

- Page 80, line 7, *for* "confirm" *read* "conform."
85, ,, 10, ,, "*cogitable*" *read* "*cogitabile*."
138, ,, 20, ,, "obscured" *read* "observed."
185, ,, 2, ,, "grounds" *read* "modes."
233, ,, 23, ,, "fall" *read* "fail."

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PRIMARY BELIEFS.

INTRODUCTION.

PRIMARY BELIEFS IN GENERAL.

§ 1. *Do Primary Beliefs Exist?*

SUPPOSING that a man doubts, or wishes to enquire into, the truth of an opinion which he has entertained upon any subject whatever, he can only remove his uncertainty by examining on what grounds he has come to entertain that opinion. He may find, perhaps, that it follows by fair reasoning from some other opinion as to which he feels a greater degree of confidence. Or he may have taken it up on the authority of some one whom he supposes wise enough to know what is true, and honest enough to say it. A thoroughly inquisitive mind will not long be satisfied with this. It becomes necessary to examine, why is the reasoning process to be relied upon? whether the opinion which lies further back, and from which the doctrine under consideration is deducible, is really true? how it is that the wise man who is his authority can have come to know the truth of the matter in question? or the like; and thus there may be a very long series of enquiries, one hanging upon or suggested by another, before our enquirer is brought to a stand.

This train of questioning has, however, an end somewhere. Our opinions do not all hang one upon another in

reciprocal dependence or as an endless series. The process of seeking backwards from our opinions to the true grounds of them will be found to lead us at last to certain beliefs, or notions, or modes of mental action, which necessarily involve beliefs or notions, which we have, we can't tell how or whence. It appears to us as natural to hold those beliefs, as to see, or hear, or use any of our senses ; yet we can as little explain or account for them, or reduce them to anything simpler, as we can explain or account for or simplify that which we mean by the colour scarlet, or the sound of the wind. But, just as any doubt one might have as to the reports of our outward senses is much cleared away by finding that everybody else has sensations of the same kind, so is it with these primary beliefs ; any misgivings we might entertain as to the legitimacy of our holding them are very much assuaged when we discover that everybody else is in the same condition, in this respect, with ourselves.

Supposing the fact were established, that we have such beliefs, thus unaccountable and inexplicable, and that we all have the same beliefs, the most obvious explanation of this fact would seem to be, that we have them as it were implanted in us at our birth, holding them by the same title as our bodily senses, appetites, and passions,—simply in virtue of our constitution as human beings. That we should be sent into the world ready equipped with such instruments for the attainment of truth hardly appears stranger than that, for example, we should be furnished beforehand—as on the most materialistic theory it is admitted we are—with a faculty of attention, always on the alert to seize upon and spiritualize the impressions taken in through the bodily organs.

We are, however, already on debateable ground. There have been metaphysicians, and those of very great emi-

nence, to whom this way of explaining the matter has appeared utterly unsatisfactory. That which has been called the Sensationalist school of philosophy in modern times, from the first followers of Locke down to Mr. J. S. Mill, declares war, and carries it on with the utmost animosity, upon the theory of primary beliefs—or, as the phrase used to be, “innate ideas.” The favourite metaphor in this school is that the mind of man is like white paper, with no mark or character of its own, simply open to receive impressions which come to it from without, through the senses. They are not content with saying—what can hardly be denied—that all a man’s conscious knowledge comes to him by degrees after his birth; they will not even allow that there may be in the mind of man,—latent, unknown even to himself, until brought to the surface by some external stimulus,—a special aptitude for working out trains of thought after some preordained form,—an aptitude which compels the mind to run as it were in one particular groove. According to this school, then, those which we call “primary beliefs” are pronounced to be nothing more than inductions from experience.

Into this controversy it will not be necessary to enter, further than formally to note its existence, and the brief outline of the course of argument which it involves.

The *onus probandi* lies with the Sensationalists. They have undertaken to account for the origin of a certain class of human beliefs, the existence of which is admitted on both sides. They affirm that these beliefs come to us through experience by the senses. Their opponents simply say that they do not know whence these beliefs come: they find them to exist in man everywhere and always, so far as they have had the opportunity of observing, and they cannot trace them further back; they infer, therefore, that they belong to man as man, just as his senses do. If

any more ambitious speculators profess to know from what original these beliefs are derived, it certainly rests with them to exhibit the genealogy.

Further, we have a right to demand, not simply that the Sensationalists shall somehow or other show us a possibility of deriving the beliefs in question from experience, but that they shall do this without maiming or mutilating the beliefs themselves. It no doubt is open to them to prove, if they can, that the beliefs are erroneous, or held with exaggeration as certainties when in truth only probable. But it would be arguing in a circle, were it to be maintained that, first, all beliefs must come from experience, for every one of them can be traced to and sufficiently accounted for by experience ; secondly, this or that general belief can be accounted for by experience up to a certain point,—that is to say, experience can lead us to something which closely though imperfectly resembles the belief in question ; thirdly, in so far as the general belief does not resemble that scientific counterpart of it which has thus been framed, the general belief must be erroneous, for it transcends experience, which is the only source of knowledge.

It is not to be supposed that reasoners so acute as the founders of the Sensationalist school should have overlooked a fallacy which is so conspicuous when exhibited in this concise form. The materials for stating it in this form have, however, only been accumulated gradually, and the school itself had acquired a sort of stability and even ascendancy before its doctrines had been so far developed as to bring out their inherent weakness. Thus the followers of that school were committed to a line of argument which has since been proved untenable. Locke himself begins his great work with a formal attack on the doctrine of innate ideas. The scope and leading purpose of the

work itself is, to exhibit the manner in which all the various furniture of the human understanding can be traced back to experience,—an experience of two very different kinds, experience of the outward world through the senses, and experience of the internal world enfolded in a man's own nature through what Locke not happily terms "reflexion," by which term he means something like "self-introspection." All this aims at that which I have marked as proposition 1st of the Sensationalist's argument,—viz., "all beliefs must come from experience ; for every one of them can be traced to and sufficiently accounted for by experience." The followers of Locke—at least, the most eminent amongst them—ignoring for the most part his profound doctrine concerning what he calls "reflexion," attempted a task which he would never have ventured on, namely, to deduce all knowledge from experience of the outer world through the senses. This task, for a series of years, and by one writer following another, was worked at until with amazing ingenuity there were produced, as results from outward experience, counterparts, more or less resembling the originals, of some of the most difficult primary beliefs. All this looked very triumphant for the Sensationalists, until these facsimiles were attacked, in a sceptical spirit, by Hume, who demonstrated the worthlessness of some of the most important among them, without suspecting, apparently, that they were anything else but the original foundations of human knowledge. Hume appears to have been so rooted a believer in the Sensationalist school, which in his day had long been the predominant if not the only living school of philosophy, as to have honestly held by that which I have marked as proposition 3rd,—that, in so far as the general belief does not resemble that scientific counterpart of it which had been framed for him by his teachers, the general

belief must be erroneous, since it transcends experience, which is the only source of knowledge.¹ Thus between them all the fallacious circle was completed.

As we proceed in the present inquiry, we shall be able to see more clearly to how great an extent this maiming and mutilating of men's primary beliefs has been carried in the Sensationalist school—how severe has been the operation of that Procrustean bed to which they have cut down all the productions of the human mind. Some examples of this are as follow :—

1st. Absolute certainty, on any subject involving a universal proposition, is on this philosophy impossible. For, since all knowledge whatever comes through the senses, and so is of particulars only, it cannot legitimately be extended to the universal. The highest attainable certainty is no more, therefore, than a very high degree of probability. This is so, even with regard to the truths of mathematics. If we have a strong and rooted belief to the contrary, that belief is illusory.

2nd. Reasoning is a process which loses some portion of its strength and value at each link in the chain. This would not be the case, could we construct major premisses which should be absolutely true; but, this being impossible, since no general proposition can be more than probable, there must be a diminution of probability with every step in the reasoning.

3rd. Another result of this philosophy is that the popular notion concerning Substance must be illusory as transcending experience. In other words, what I really *know*

¹ Hume, treating of causal efficacy, says that if we pretend to have any just idea of such efficacy, we must produce some instance wherein its operations are obvious to the consciousness or sensation, failing which we must acknowledge that the idea itself is impossible, "since the principle of innate ideas, *which alone can save us from this dilemma*, has been already refuted, and is now almost universally rejected in the learned world" (Hum. Nat. i. 277).

is that a stream of various life—a succession of images, impressions, thoughts, perceptions, is going on; what I *believe*, but what I have no right to believe, is that, not only are there thoughts and impressions, but there is a self which thinks, and an external world or non-self, from which the impressions proceed. I have no right to believe either in a self or a non-self, as the substance or ground of the phenomena; for the only thing which experience, my sole teacher, teaches me is, that the phenomena themselves exist.

4th. M. Cousin, in his *Critical Examination of Locke on the Understanding*, has pointed out several other instances in which the Sensationalists fail to account for, and are consequently compelled to dispute the validity of, some of the most recognised and firmly rooted beliefs of the human mind. For example, the idea of space, as something distinct from and not limited to body; and the idea of time, as something other than the mere succession of events; space being regarded as the *place* of body, and time as the *place* of events; are shown by that profound thinker—as, indeed, they had been shown by Kant before him—to be beyond the range of any experience derivable through the senses.¹

5th. But perhaps the most striking and the best known among the failures of the Sensationalist philosophy is that which has reference to the popular belief concerning cause. Hume demonstrated that experience could only furnish us with a most inadequate substitute for this belief, viz., the notion of a constant sequence—the invariable succeeding of one thing to another.² Something happens, and we

¹ See Lecture ii., pp. 126 to 133; and Lecture iii., pp. 149 to 152, of Dr. Henry's translation.

² All ideas are derived from, and represent, impressions. We never have any impression that contains any power or efficacy. We never therefore have any idea of power" (Hum. Nat. i. 282). . . . "A cause is an object precedent

observe that whenever it happens some other thing happens too ; and we thereupon give to the former the name of cause of the latter. This is all that our experience of phenomena tells or can tell us ; more, indeed ; for experience cannot tell us that one particular thing always follows upon some other thing, only that it has done so in every case which has yet come under our observation. But the general belief concerning cause—the thing which has to be accounted for—is no less than this ; that every physical event which happens—every physical change—every movement—not only has but must have a cause. We cannot help believing thus : there seems a palpable absurdity in attempting so much as to question it. But if this belief either must have come to us through experience or ought to be discarded as groundless, it clearly ought to be discarded ; for it cannot have come to us by any experience. Our observing that, in very many instances, when one thing takes place some other thing also takes place, would certainly not of itself be sufficient to justify our believing that, whenever any event takes place, it is necessary that there should have been some other change as a cause for it. Not only is succession a different thing from cause ; for cause involves the idea of power, in addition to that of

and contiguous to another, and so united with it that the idea of the one determines the mind to form the idea of the other, and the impression of the one to form a more lively idea of the other" (Ib. i. 298). By the "more lively idea" here spoken of, Hume apparently intends *belief*, which, according to this author, is merely an intense and lively image or idea, resulting from frequent repetition. "The fancy melts together all those images that concur, and extracts from them one single idea or image, which is intense and lively in proportion to the number of experiments from which it is derived" (Ib. i. 246).

Dr. Brown's once celebrated answer to Hume amounts only to this : that we gain through experience a belief in the uniformity of natural sequences, and that this belief represents all that is contained, or at any rate all that is valid, in the belief of necessary causation. The weak points in this theory have been so distinctly pointed out by Sir W. Hamilton (Lect. xxxix. Met.) that it is unnecessary here to do more than to note the fact that the theory has been refuted.

a sequence; but contingent succession does not involve necessary succession: it cannot be, then, that our experience of contingent succession is of itself adequate to generate a belief in necessary causality.

In the face of these difficulties, it certainly seems the most prudent course, not, indeed, dogmatically to assert, still less to attempt to prove, the direct negative of the Sensationalist hypothesis, but to treat their positive hypothesis itself as at present non-proven, and to turn our thoughts into some different path. If the hypothesis that the mind of man is a pure blank, simply passive and neutral to receive impressions of whatever kind through the senses, fails to account for human knowledge and belief such as in fact it is, we should proceed to try whether our philosophizing will be more fortunate if we adopt the other hypothesis, and suppose that, of those beliefs or notions which the human race is possessed of, some indeed are adventitious, as having been grafted in by external teaching or observation, but others are innate and part of the very staple of our intellectual being.

This new point of departure for metaphysics was first (amongst the moderns) suggested by Reid, and has been followed out by Kant, Cousin, and Sir William Hamilton.

§ 2. *Are Primary Beliefs Trustworthy?*

Assuming, then, that there may be certain beliefs which, even whilst latent, and before they have emerged upon the field of consciousness, have yet been operative in moulding a man's conscious opinions from the earliest dawnings of thought within his mind, being emplaced in his nature, and constituting a part of the spiritual mechanism, so to speak, by which he is made a reasonable

being; and assuming further that it is in our power to ascertain which amongst our beliefs are thus innate and primary; the next question to which we should direct our attention is, how should these primary beliefs be treated—what degree of reliance may we properly give to them?

In this are involved two questions which should carefully be distinguished from one another. One is, Is this or that belief really a primary belief? The other, Does the fact of our holding this or that primary belief establish that the thing believed is true? Any philosophy of the primary beliefs, to be serviceable, must furnish us with the means of answering both these questions.

In the present introductory discussion, it may be convenient to begin with the second of them. Let us suppose that some particular belief has been sufficiently shown to belong to the class of innate primary beliefs, not susceptible of being traced back to anything more rudimentary, nor of being accounted for in any way, except from this character of being a part of our rational nature; and let us endeavour to determine what degree of allegiance we ought to offer to such a belief.

From the nature of the case, the belief in question cannot be proved by deduction or induction from anything else; our only reason for believing it is that we find we do believe it. Were it not thus, the belief would not be a primary one.

This being so, a sceptical argument immediately presents itself to the mind. Are we justified in supposing a thing to be true, merely because, without having any reason for believing it, we do believe it? What is to hinder this belief itself, natural and innate if you please, from being a mere illusion? Supposing that, for sport or caprice, or from some motive beyond our capacity to

fathom, the human race had been created with an inherent aptitude to believe that which in fact were not true, there would be no possibility of their ever finding out the deception. This inherent warp in their mental constitution would be to them what a deflection in his compass would be to a mariner at sea, supposing that he could neither see sun nor stars, nor fall in with any other ship. The error, if uniform for the whole race, might be as self-consistent as any truth. Self-consistency, indeed, in such a matter, would prove absolutely nothing. But, if it is equally possible that these primary beliefs may be illusory as that they are not, and if it is impossible to verify them, or in any other way to determine which of these is the right supposition, must it not follow that all human knowledge, in so far as it rests upon beliefs of such a character, has no stronger foundation than the most absolute uncertainty ?

Perhaps the best answer to such scepticism is to point out to what lengths it must carry us.

Neither dogmatist nor sceptic has here any right to draw distinctions between the primary beliefs, accepting some and rejecting others. The authority of each and all stands or falls together. For it is now the question whether or not we are to refuse allegiance to these beliefs on the ground of their being unverifiable : and in this respect all our primary beliefs are alike. There are no doubt great differences between them as to the manner in which they affect the mind. We shall find, for example, as we proceed, that some of the primary beliefs come into play,—that is to say, make their appearance in our consciousness, and so come to be expressed in verbal propositions, at a much earlier stage in a man's mental development than others do. Some are of much broader application and more general use than others. Some, again, have had the good fortune to come athwart no controverted

doctrine in philosophy or theology, and so have been suffered to remain undisturbed in their hold upon men's minds; whilst others, though perhaps held in no less esteem by the unperturbed popular mind, have had their roots plucked at, and so have been discredited, by the followers of some sect or opinion to which they have been found inconvenient. Thus far, and perhaps in some other respects which it would be tedious to point out, there may be differences between one primary belief and another. There may of course be differences of degree as to the force of evidence upon the question whether this or that belief is or is not primary. But, when once it is admitted that a particular belief is primary, this then stands in precisely the same rank, as regards its authority over our minds, with any other primary belief. If we accept it, on the ground that it is a part of the original structure of our minds, then we are in consistency bound similarly to accept every other primary belief. If we reject it, on the ground that it cannot be verified, and so may for aught we know be illusory, then we are in consistency bound similarly to reject every other primary belief. All, then, so far as the present question is concerned, stand or fall together.

Now, the full extent of our obligation to these primary beliefs, and the utter dreariness of our intellectual position in case we resolve on disowning them, can only be discerned after a somewhat detailed investigation of them. Some steps towards such an investigation will have been made as we proceed. What is now to be said, at the outset, is only to be accepted provisionally, on the condition that it shall eventually be proved.

In the first place, then, that which appears to us the most solid and unquestionable of all proofs, the evidence of our senses, is, under the influence of this scepticism, one

of the first to break down. Our senses appear to inform us of the existence of what we call the external world,—of objects, outside, as it were, and apart from ourselves, and having an existence which is in a manner independent of us, and would continue the same whether our senses were to take cognizance of it or not. This opinion, however, our sceptical philosophy will not permit us long to entertain. If there are objects existing in themselves,—if trees, and houses, and other human beings really have any sort of substantial existence,—yet it is certainly true that we can only look at these objects through the windows of our senses. It is our own brain, or, to speak more accurately, it is that portion or faculty of our mind which, in the popular language, is supposed to hold communication with the brain, by which we receive these impressions, perceptions, or whatever we may please to call them, which are supposed to teach us the existence of an external world. We believe that the medium through which we fancy we perceive external objects does not distort them, or at any rate that, if one sense distorts them, we have it in our power to correct this by the help of some other, or by comparing one observation with another. But what right have we to believe this? Our belief that our senses tell us the truth, that the picture outside the window corresponds with the picture seen through the window, is only one of those unverified primary beliefs which it is settled that we are to reject as fallacious. For aught we can possibly tell, there may be some refracting, distorting influence in the medium, such that, whatever this outside world may really be, it shall at all events be wholly unlike that which it seems to us. But we must go further. Having thus shown that we have no reason whatever for supposing that the outside world bears any likeness to that copy of it which we say we see and hear and touch, have

we any reason for thinking that there is any outside world at all? We *believe* that there is. But this belief, unfortunately, is, like the other, a primary one, which it is impossible in any way to verify. That which passes before what we call our mind's eye—a sort of dance of shadows—when we look and listen and taste and smell, or when we remember any of these operations, or when we think about them and compare one with another, somehow puts the fancy into our heads that these shadows have somewhere their corresponding substances. But we have no reason whatever for thinking so, beyond the fact that such is our belief. This, then, is but another of these delusive primary beliefs which our philosophy has refused to recognise.

Sceptical philosophers have in all seriousness gone thus far. With remarkable inconsistency most of them have been content here to stop. The legitimate application of their own principle ought to carry them very much further.

For, if the existence of an external world—the non-self—be thus questionable, the existence of a man's self is on their hypothesis equally so. That which we are really conscious of is, the existence of a certain succession of phenomena,—of sights and sounds and every variety of perception, of remembrances, which appear to be like fainter copies of those perceptions, of thoughts, fancies, emotions, and the like. Of these phenomena, we ascribe some wholly and others in part to the supposed activity of a self, or cause, or substratum, which is thought to put forth a power, while these appearances are simply the productions of that power. We know that there are thoughts—we suppose therefore that there is a being which thinks. Even this supposition, however, will be found upon a close inspection to be traceable to nothing more solid than a primary, that is, an unverifiable, belief.

This will plainly appear to any man who can contrive for a few moments to divest himself of that rooted conviction which he probably entertains, that there is such a person as himself; and will quietly consider what reason he has for thinking so. He thinks so, he will find, either simply because he is constituted so to think, or in virtue of a sort of notion in his mind that the various thoughts, images, and sensations of which he is conscious must have some cause for their existence. But why does he think that they must have a cause,—a receptive cause within any more than an exciting cause from without? Turn the matter as one may, it seems impossible to account for the fact, that we think so, unless by saying that we appear to be so constituted that we cannot help having this belief. Here, then, we come again to a primary belief of the mind. If, however, we are sceptical as to primary beliefs, we have no reason to be otherwise than sceptical as to this. It is a belief which cannot be verified. It would be a mistake to say that we come to it by induction from the phenomena of which we are conscious. No induction can help us here. The phenomena are not in the least accounted for by this supposition of a substratum in which they inhere,—an unknown force, of whose workings they are the manifestations. Nor would it be in the least more difficult to explain the phenomena, on the supposition that the phenomena themselves were the only things which exist. That certain thoughts, feelings, and sensations should follow one another as a sort of phantasmagoria, without either any real objects to excite them, or any real thinking person to be the subject of them, is a hypothesis which is only incredible, or even improbable, because of that strong inward conviction to the contrary which, though unaccountable, appears to be implanted in the breast of every man. In other words, a man's sole war-

rant for believing that he himself exists, is, a primary belief of his own mind.

These results, paradoxical as they may now appear, will probably be accepted more readily when the argument has been worked out more in detail. In the meantime, let thus much be assumed, and the remainder of the "sceptic's progress" may be very briefly sketched.

In fact, this work has been already done, not only most ably, and in a manner the most agreeable to a reader, but so as to enforce conviction, having been done in all good faith and seriousness, by a votary of that philosophy which rejects primary beliefs. I refer to Professor Ferrier's "Institutes of Metaphysics."

In this book the learned writer demonstrates, with a happy mixture of logical deduction and pleasant illustration, that, if once there be conceded a part only—for he does not demand the whole—of this twofold scepticism as to the real existence of an external world and of the self, there must necessarily follow a state of intellectual confusion so thorough, so abject, that, after the author has demonstrated that it is not a state of mind which deserves the name of knowledge, he proceeds to establish that it is not even one that can be dignified with the name of ignorance,—since the term ignorance appears to denote some possibility of knowledge, which is more than the learned Professor is disposed to concede to the unfortunate race of man.

Ferrier's starting point is this:—There is indeed a self: but, amongst the phenomena of which we are conscious—thoughts, sensations, etc.—that flow of living which metaphysicians sometimes have termed "the phenomena of consciousness"—there is a mixture of self and non-self, and it is not possible for human reason to disentangle these two ingredients. This postulate the Professor requires us to

grant him at the outset; but when we have done so, he undertakes to deduce from it, by strict demonstration, that there can be no such thing as knowledge, in any proper sense of the term, attainable by the human race; nor any such thing as even a legitimate ignorance. All things float in uncertainty. And not only does he undertake this, but it is not too much to say that he accomplishes it; at any rate, if he does not, it is excessively difficult to point out the weak place in his chain of reasoning.

Now it will be seen at a glance that Mr. Ferrier's postulate is based upon a partial adoption of the sceptical doctrine at present under consideration, namely, that our primary beliefs are not trustworthy because not verifiable by any other thing than themselves. No man, who has not been exercised in metaphysics, finds any great difficulty in distinguishing between these two ingredients of self and non-self in perception or in other forms of consciousness. This is strikingly apparent when we compare together two different modes of consciousness. Every man apprehends the difference between perception—*e.g.*, seeing—and remembering an object formerly perceived. Every man (metaphysicians of course excepted) believes that in the former case there is the cooperation, so to speak, of something else in addition to the attention or other activity of his own mind; while, in the latter case, he believes no less firmly that the entire work is done by his unassisted self. But why we thus believe—what instinct prompts us to it—this is an absolute mystery. We do believe it; and the belief appears to be a primary and inexplicable one. For this reason, it appears that Mr. Ferrier has chosen to exercise his right to reject it as non-proven. Why he did not go a little further—why he should have chosen, on no more solid ground than another primary belief, to assume that there is such a being as a self at all, is a question

which we need not stay to ask. The Professor has chosen not to be so thoroughly sceptical as, on his own premisses, he had a right to be; but he has been sceptical enough for his purpose, and for ours, since he has shown that, even without turning on the full power of his battery, he can demolish the entire fabric of human knowledge.

This negative creed, however, is certainly very repugnant to any mind which is in a healthy state. We have an aptitude for the quest after knowledge, and a pleasure in the attainment of a seeming certainty, which indicate, if not that we have been framed for the acquisition of truth, yet that, if we do indeed labour under such incapacity for the acquisition, there is a singular inharmony and even contradiction in our nature. If it be the fact, as Cicero has said, that men appear to have the same natural appetite for the research of truth that some dogs have for the chase or that horses have for running,¹ it certainly is a misfortune to have been inflicted with a passion which, on this hypothesis, can never be gratified, and only serves to mislead and beguile us.

Let us see, therefore, whether we cannot find the means of escaping from this very unwelcome scepticism.

Sir W. Hamilton brings forward the following argument, to show that we ought to accept the authority of our primary beliefs as witnesses to the objective truth of the thing believed:—

“How, it is asked, do these primary propositions—these cognitions at first hand, these fundamental facts, feelings, beliefs,—certify us of their own veracity? To this the only possible answer is that, as elements of our mental

¹ Cicero is speaking of the Epicureans—“Hi non viderunt, ut ad cursum equum, ad indagandum canem, sic homines ad duas res, ut ait Aristoteles, intelligendum et agendum esse natum, quasi mortalem deum; contraque, ut tardem aliquem et languidam pecudem, ad pastum et ad procreandi voluptatem, hoc divinum animal ortum esse voluerunt” (De Finibus).

constitution, as the essential conditions of our knowledge, they *must* by us be accepted as true. To suppose their falsehood, is to suppose that we are created capable of intelligence, in order to be made the victims of delusion ; that God is a deceiver, and the root of our nature a lie. But such a supposition, if gratuitous, is manifestly illegitimate. For, on the contrary, the data of our original consciousness must, it is evident, *in the first instance*, be presumed true. It is only if proved false that their authority can, *in consequence of that proof*, be, in the second instance, disallowed" (Reid, p. 743).

"It cannot but be acknowledged that the veracity of consciousness must, at least, in the first instance, be conceded. 'Neganti incumbit probatio.' Nature is not gratuitously to be assumed to work, not only in vain, but in counteraction of herself. Our faculty of knowledge is not, without ground, to be supposed an instrument of illusion. Man, unless the melancholy fact be proved, is not to be held organized for the attainment, and actuated by the love, of truth, only to become the dupe and victim of a perfidious creator" (Ib. p. 745).

It is very possible that we may come to the same conclusion as Sir W. Hamilton, without being altogether satisfied with the reasons by which he justifies that conclusion.

All that is theological in his reasoning, for example, may very fairly be objected to as premature, if not as unsatisfactory. It must be borne in mind that we are now almost in the first stage of our inquiry. We may not unreasonably hope, as one result of our philosophizing, to gain from it some assistance in the study of natural theology. But, if we do hope this, we must guard most scrupulously against taking results of that study for granted at the outset, since otherwise we shall at last probably find ourselves reasoning in a circle. We must come to the in-

vestigation unprepossessed, and to that end must force our minds into a state of artificial ignorance, in order to build up our knowledge upon a secure basis. We are not, therefore, as yet in a position to determine whether the hypothesis of a *Deus quidam deceptor* be or be not more probable than that opposite hypothesis favoured by Hamilton, of a Deity, who, having endowed the mind of man with an appetite for truth and certainty, has done so with an intention that truth and certainty shall be within its reach. We are not even supposed to know at present that a Deity exists.

But, apart from this objection, even supposing us to be at liberty thus early to draw the results of theology into the service of philosophy, it might still be questioned whether the manner in which this has been done by Hamilton is legitimate. With all our theology, there yet remains much that is inscrutable to human reason in the apparent designs of the Almighty with reference to the race of man. The existence of evil, and especially of moral evil, in the workmanship of a Being infinite in power as well as goodness, is an enigma which may well teach us to be cautious how we assume *à priori* that such or such must be the purpose of the Omnipotent. We have a certain appetite: we assume therefore that the gratification of this appetite must have been among the purposes of our creation; an assumption hardly more warrantable than would be the contrary assumption, that the controlling and mortification of the appetite in question, and so the elevation of our moral character at the expense of the intellectual part, has been the thing intended. To these theories it is our duty at this stage to object that, with our present means of knowledge, both are for us alike inadmissible.

It is true that Hamilton puts forward this argument, founded on the supposed purpose of God and harmony of

nature, merely as a sort of presumption or "argument of the first instance," intended to be so far operative as to impose on the adversary the burden of proof. But, where it is a question of doubting, a man's adversary is himself, and he wishes for something more than such a mere technical or formal victory, as may be won by showing that the negative of the thing doubted cannot be proved. Indeed, scepticism is never thoroughly triumphant until it is able to say—"You cannot prove the positive—I cannot prove its negative: the question lies utterly beyond the range of human reason." Mr. Ferrier is not satisfied with proving that nothing can be known: he feels impelled to establish also that nothing can be unknown; and would no doubt cheerfully admit, as the legitimate development of his own creed, that there is no certainty whatever in the chain of reasoning by which he himself has demolished the possibility of certainty in the abstract.

Is it not, indeed, somewhat unreasonable to expect arguments to be brought forward in support of merely doubting anything? If a man's doubts come from within, the fact of doubting implies a feeling that there is not sufficient assurance, in the way of proofs or otherwise, as to the truth of the thing doubted. Such doubt can only be removed by reviewing the evidence, and then finding that it really is sufficient: it cannot be got rid of by simply objecting that the *onus probandi* lies with the other side. So, if one man attempts to throw doubt upon the belief of another, all that he has to do is to bring that other into the same frame of mind as one whose doubt springs from within himself,—that is, to inspire him with a suspicion that his belief rests on insufficient grounds. But, to do this, he has simply to point out the insufficiency of those grounds, not to prove positively, either the truth of some contrary belief, or the impossibility of having certainty either for or against the belief in question.

To return to Sir W. Hamilton's argument. If we reject that portion of it which is founded on a supposed purpose of the Almighty, and that which concerns the *onus probandi*, nothing remains beyond the assertion that "as elements of our mental constitution, as the essential conditions of our knowledge," these primary beliefs "*must* by us be accepted as true."

There is this inconvenience about the extreme conciseness of Hamilton's style, that one cannot always feel sure of having caught the meaning really intended by the writer. Here, assuming the meaning to be that we are compelled to accept the truth of our primary beliefs by the very fact that we are so constituted as to hold those beliefs, an argument is presented which it does not seem easy to answer.

When we believe a thing, and the belief clings to us and cannot be entirely shaken off, being fixed in our very mental constitution, it can hardly be said to be in our power really to question the truth of the thing believed. We are so constituted that we cannot help believing it; that is to say, we are at any given moment persuaded that the thing is true; and it is idle, therefore, to go about to shake this belief,—in other words, to ask a man not to be a man,—to ask a being, one part of whose very nature is to hold such or such a belief, to divest himself of that part of his nature. To persuade me that there is no such thing as a self, or an external world, or space, or time, or a cause, is to persuade me to unmake myself. I cannot really disbelieve these things. I cannot genuinely doubt them. The well-known confession of Hume, that, when he left his writing desk and his lamp and went into the society of other men, he found his scepticism drop off, and caught himself perpetually believing as much as his neighbours, may serve to show how unreal and insincere must be the

attempt to disbelieve that which our nature bids us to believe.¹

If to this it be objected by any^{one}—"I am at this moment doubting—it must therefore be in my power to doubt," the true answer seems to be, "only wait, and see whether your doubt will not drop away of its own accord." The doubting, in such a case, will perhaps be found to have been the complex and artificial result of some course of reasoning; based, perhaps, on some argument of analogy or probability, such as an inference from the errors which have been found to be mixed up in all science; in which case it is sure to happen that the mind, if only left to itself, will, by the silent activity of some healthful internal instinct, spontaneously expel the noxious doubt, and restore itself to its normal state of belief.

If this argument in favour of the validity of our primary beliefs, founded on the fact that we do and must hold them, and are therefore under a certain subjective necessity to accept them as truths, be not considered sufficient, at least it is open to us to accept the truth of them as a postulate. We may assume, in the way of hypothesis, that what we believe without a reason, what we believe because we appear to be so constructed from our birth that we cannot as a habit of mind believe otherwise, is really true. It may not be satisfactory that we should have to build our entire

¹ "As experience will sufficiently convince any one, who thinks it worth while to try, that, though he can find no error in the foregoing arguments, yet he still continues to believe, and think, and reason as usual, he may safely conclude that his reasoning and belief is some sensation or peculiar manner of conception, which 'tis impossible for mere ideas and reflections to destroy" (*Hum. Nat.* i. 322). . . "Nature, by an absolute and uncontrollable necessity, has determined us to judge as well as to breathe and feel; nor can we any more forbear viewing certain objects in a stronger and fuller light, upon account of their customary connexion with a present impression, than we can hinder ourselves from thinking as long as we are awake, or seeing the surrounding bodies, when we turn our eyes towards them in broad sunshine" (*Ib.* 320, 321).

fabric of knowledge upon a hypothesis: still, if we are in the position of being compelled to build it either upon this or upon the contrary hypothesis, this certainly appears to be the more reasonable of the two.

Without pretending absolutely to decide between these two views—whether the objective truth of that which men primarily believe ought to be taken as proved, or treated as a thing to be assumed—it is proposed in these pages to proceed on the supposition that the object-matter of a primary belief is a truth.

Before quitting this part of our subject, one remark may be added with reference to an argument which Hamilton deduces from a supposed harmony and self-consistency in our primary beliefs.

“In the second place,” says Hamilton, still continuing the same chain of reasoning, “though the veracity of the primary convictions of consciousness must, in the outset, be admitted, it still remains competent to lead a proof that they are undeserving of credit. But how is this to be done? As the ultimate grounds of knowledge, these convictions cannot be redargued from any higher knowledge; and, as original beliefs, they are paramount in certainty to every derivative assurance. But they are many; they are, in authority, coordinate; and their testimony is clear and precise. It is therefore competent to us to view them in correlation; to compare their declarations; and to consider whether they contradict, and, by contradicting, invalidate each other. This mutual contradiction is possible in two ways. 1st. It may be that the primary data themselves are directly or immediately contradictory of each other; 2nd. It may be that they are mediately or indirectly contradictory, inasmuch as the consequences to which they necessarily lead, and for the truth or falsehood of which they are therefore responsible, are mutually

repugnant. By evincing either of these, the veracity of consciousness will be disproved; for in either case consciousness is shown to be inconsistent with itself, and consequently inconsistent with the unity of truth. . . . For, while, on the one hand, all that is not contradictory is not therefore true; on the other, a positive proof of falsehood, in one instance, establishes a presumption of probable falsehood in all; for the maxim, '*falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*,' must determine the credibility of consciousness, as the credibility of every other witness.

"No attempt to show that the data of consciousness are, either in themselves or in their necessary consequences, mutually contradictory, has yet succeeded: and the presumption in favour of the truth of consciousness has therefore never been redargued" (Reid, Note A, pp. 745, 746).

Upon this passage it is to be noted that the true state of the case, as regards the self-consistency of our primary beliefs and of the consequences to which they severally lead, will probably be found to be this:—Within a certain very extensive range of topics, there is a perfect harmony amongst our primary beliefs; but beyond that range we come to seeming contradictions. Not so much in themselves as in the consequences which by necessary reasoning appear to be deducible from them, it seems to us, on many points, as though our primary beliefs were in conflict with one another. This fact, taken in conjunction with the fact of their harmonizing so completely within the narrower range of thought which lies closely around our daily life, can hardly fail to suggest to us the hypothesis, not that our beliefs are unreliable altogether, but that there is a certain incompleteness about them, perhaps from their needing to be supplemented with some other beliefs or some other intellectual faculties, the necessity for which is not perceived so long as the mind is working within its

legitimate sphere of thought, but emerges into view so soon as we attempt to travel beyond our natural limits. The self-consistency of our primary beliefs within a given sphere, although it does not prove that the things believed are true, may yet suffice to overthrow that presumption of their entire falsity which it is attempted to found upon their want of self-consistency outside of that sphere.

§ 3. *The Tests of a Primary Belief.*

Let us now return to what was said at the beginning of the preceding section.

Granting that there are such things as primary beliefs existing in the mind of man as man, and therefore common to all men; and assuming further that such beliefs are valid—in other words, that the things thus believed are true; we may now proceed to enquire, by what essential notes or characters we are to distinguish an original or primary belief from one that is derivative.

Our beliefs, it will be found, are of two kinds: the one, such as are formed by degrees from experience, through observation whether of external things or of the workings of our own minds; the other, such as are primary, in the sense above defined. If we enquire for tests, by which to determine whether this or that individual belief belongs to the first or the second class, we must search out those properties of a belief which may exist in those of one class but cannot exist in those of the other. Every such property will serve as a crucial test. It is well to have several tests; both for confirmation of one another, and because it may happen that, in this or that case, one or the other test may be the only one practically available.

1. Experience is only of the individual: every general proposition which expresses a truth learnt through ex-

perience can, consequently, be traced back to something less general, and finally to individual facts of experience. There may, of course, through forgetfulness, or from other causes, be a difficulty in thus tracing back to its origin this or that particular experiential belief; but, theoretically, the thing is possible. If then we find that we have certain beliefs concerning generals, which by no possibility can be traced back to anything more individual, such beliefs cannot have come through experience.

2. If we have a belief that some general proposition not only is true, but cannot but be true—in other words, is necessary—this belief cannot have come to us by experience.

This will be found to follow from the way in which knowledge through experience is acquired; which is, first by simple accumulation of particular facts, and then by a mental process ascending in the way of induction to truths more and more general. But if by the term “general proposition” we understand some proposition which is to hold good for individual cases, which have not yet been observed, as well as for those which have,—*e.g.*, for future cases as well as for the past,—then it is clear that no experience can give the right to affirm dogmatically that any such general proposition is necessarily true,—in other words, that no case to the contrary is possible. For, to affirm this, would be to fall into the error which is pointed out by Mr. Babbage in his *Bridgewater Treatise*, of those who, observing that a certain series of numbers, the law of whose progression they are ignorant of, have gone in regular arithmetical progression from number one to number a thousand, hastily infer, not that it is probable, but that it is certain and necessary, that number one thousand and one shall be in the same ratio of progression; which, in the instance Mr. Babbage gives, is not the fact. An induction, from a large number of individual cases ob-

served, as to some case not yet observed, may give an exceedingly high probability, but never can give such an absolute certainty as that we can say the fact cannot be otherwise. In other words, general truths of experience can never be held by us as necessary truths.¹

3. Beliefs which come through experience, being founded on knowledge which is cumulative, having every shade of probability, so that perhaps no two such beliefs are held by any man with precisely the same strength, appear to grow upon the mind, or perhaps to lose force, as proofs accumulate, or as the recollection of them grows fainter. If, then, we find we have some belief, which has undergone no change of this kind, and is not susceptible of such a change, but continually dwells in the mind as it were fullgrown and perfect, having the same degree of evidence for us in all moods and at all ages, such a belief must be a primary belief; for it cannot have come through experience.

This test, however, it must be admitted, is one difficult of application, and perhaps of small value; since it may be doubted whether any of our beliefs are thus full-grown and perfect, so that we can confidently infer from their completeness that they are not susceptible of more or less, excepting such beliefs as are also necessary, and so discernible by our second test.

The above three tests serve to indicate beliefs which cannot be empirical (experiential). Those which follow may serve, on the other hand, to mark beliefs which cannot be primary, and so must be empirical or derivative.

¹ The contrary opinion is strenuously maintained by so great an authority as Mr. J. S. Mill. His controversy on this subject with Dr. Whewell, contained in Book ii. chap. v. of his great book on logic, deserves careful study. It will be shown, however, at a later stage, that Mr. Mill's argument results in this,—that our belief in necessary truths is in every case illusory. At present, our postulates are, that there are such beliefs, and that such beliefs are primary, and that the object of a primary belief is a truth.

4. A primary belief cannot be traced back to anything else. Consequently, it is not made up of, and cannot be explicated into, a plurality of beliefs; neither can it be comprehended, so that we can say how or why it is. A belief, therefore, which is not simple, or which is not incomprehensible, cannot be primary.

"A conviction is incomprehensible," says Hamilton, "when there is merely given us in consciousness *that* the object is (*ὅτι ἔστι*), and when we are unable to comprehend through a higher notion or belief *why* or *how* it is (*διότι ἔστι*). When we are able to comprehend why or how a thing is, the belief of the existence of that thing is not a primary datum of consciousness, but a subsumption under the cognition or belief which affords its reason."

5. A primary belief must be universal. For it is supposed to be a belief inherent in our nature as man, and may be termed a portion of the mechanism by which we are made intelligent beings. If therefore it can be shown that a given belief is not common to the species, such belief cannot be primary.

In applying this test, it must be borne in mind that no argument can be founded on the mere fact that a certain belief is not developed in the consciousness of all men; since our primary beliefs are often latent, secretly operative in moulding our opinions, long before they have been presented to the mind, and accepted by it as truths, in the form of articulate propositions.¹

In what has here been said, no notice has been taken of

¹ To the five tests here enumerated, may be added the first and second tests given by Buffier:—"1st. That the truths assumed as maxims of common sense should be such, that it is impossible for any disputant either to defend or to attack them, but by means of propositions which are neither more manifest nor more certain than the propositions in question; and, 2ndly, that their practical influence should extend even to those individuals who affect to dispute their authority" (Stewart, Elem. ii. 61). For some account of Buffier's system, see Reid, p. 467.

a third class of beliefs, which, however, for the sake of completeness ought not to be passed over. These are, derivative beliefs of pure reason. Every empirical belief concerning generals must, as has been seen, be derivative, since experience begins with individuals. But not every derivative belief is empirical, since pure logical deductions may be made from primary beliefs, which deductions are or may become beliefs in their turn. These derivative beliefs are to be distinguished from the primary beliefs by means of the fourth test: they can be traced back to something else.

Finally, it is to be noted that, in the application of this philosophy of primary beliefs, care must throughout be taken not to confound with a primary belief the personal convictions which a man may have acquired from education, accidental association, or prejudice of whatever kind; from which error the best safeguard appears to be, the habitual testing of a man's own beliefs by comparing them with those of other men. "The Cartesian appeal to our own consciousness," says Hallam, "just as it is in principle, *may* end in an assumption of our own prejudices as the standard of belief. Nothing can be truly self-evident but that which a clear, an honest, and an experienced understanding in another man acknowledges to be so" (Lit. Hist. vol. ii. p. 456). And from the same wise and temperate writer a further development of this caution may be borrowed, namely, that the persons to whom we should in preference make such an appeal, when it is a question of the prevalent belief of mankind on any subject, and especially on moral subjects, are, not theorists, who may easily be warped, but rather orators, poets, or men conversant with the business of ordinary life. "On such matters, poets and orators are the most unexceptionable of all witnesses, for they address themselves to the general feelings and sym-

pathies of mankind; they are neither warped by system, nor perverted by sophistry; they can attain none of their objects, they can neither please nor persuade, if they dwell on moral sentiments not in unison with those of their readers" (Lit. Hist. vol. ii. p. 580).

PART I.

ANALYSIS OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS.

CHAPTER I.

OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN GENERAL.

IN all systematic thinking, we are to proceed from the more known to the less known; for which reason it is a matter of the utmost importance that we should select the right starting point.

There are, in metaphysics, three possible starting points—matter, mind, and conscious life. Between these we have to choose.

1. The thing which to the mind untrained in mental science appears the most certain of all things, and therefore the thing most proper to be taken for granted at the outset, is, the reality of the material world. We are ready to believe the testimony of our senses. There is something solid and real about *things*; the realm of thought appears comparatively shadowy and unsubstantial.

Accordingly, we find that all the earlier tendencies of metaphysical inquiry are to take Things as the starting-point, and from them to feel out a way to the existence of Thoughts. Up to the "*cogito ergo sum*" of Descartes, it may be stated generally that, so far as there was in metaphysical inquiry a scientific procedure from the known to

the unknown, as distinguished from *a priori* reasoning from some assumed general notions, the point of departure commonly taken was the objective existence of material substances.

That, however, the existence of Things is not our true starting point seems to be tolerably obvious upon a little reflection. We are thinking; that is certain, for we are attempting to construct for ourselves a system of thought; yet, strange to say, while we are thus engaged, the thing which seems to us the most certain of all things is, that stones or trees or books exist,—objects apart from ourselves, and whose essence we have not yet considered whether we have the means of comprehending,—whilst, in the very act of forming this judgment, we are exemplifying a truth which is much nearer to our own knowledge, namely, that thoughts exist.

However real and substantial may be the objective existence of stones and trees and books, yet our knowledge of this existence, if we have any, must have come to us through our senses and through our faculty of reason. That the knowledge be genuine, supposes the fulfilment of two conditions; first, that our senses report truly; and, secondly, that our reason, by which the isolated and piecemeal reports of the senses are combined, through memory and comparison, into a mental whole, work accurately. But these conditions, being conditions of the mind or self, must be examined, if at all, by a survey from within: no reasoning founded on the supposed realities of material substances can avail us for this purpose.

2. Shall, then, the starting point for metaphysics be taken to be, the nature of a man's own self?

Unfortunately, all that a man knows about that self, when he examines closely, appears to be, that there must, he thinks, be some *cause* for the thoughts and feelings and

various sensations of which he is conscious, and that he feels a certain identity underlying all these dissimilar phenomena. To this unknown cause, thus identical or one, he gives the name of self. This is really all that he knows about that mysterious essence. I know that thoughts and feelings and sensations exist within or before a consciousness which I call mine: why or how they come, or what brings them, I cannot tell in the least. I believe—though why I do so, I have no guess—still, I do believe that there must be some force or cause which puts forth these thoughts, as a fountain underground throws up water to the surface; and to this mysterious, unaccountable, probably primary, belief, I owe the conviction that I myself exist.

But, while I am thus entirely in the dark as to what this self is, I certainly cannot, if I am to proceed from the known to the less known, take this mystery as my starting point.

3. The true point of departure for metaphysics, then, is neither the nature of the non-self nor the nature of the self. But there is one thing which at the outset is certain and indisputable for every man as soon as he begins to think; namely, the existence of his own consciousness. By this term is to be understood, not some faculty or power of the mind, but simply the aggregate of those phenomena which make up a man's life. At some times, I am conscious of seeing what appear to be objects external to myself, or of hearing sounds, or perceiving this or that sensible impression. At another time I am conscious of undergoing pleasure or pain, anger, regret, or some other emotion. Now perhaps I am conscious that I am following out some train of abstract thought. To all these states of life there is this common,—that I am conscious of being somehow busied about something or other. The facts or

phenomena of consciousness are like beads upon a string—the string being the self. Each fact is a complete thing in itself; one fact follows another in an uninterrupted succession through one's waking life; and it may be that this succession of fact after fact is our only natural measure of time.

There is about consciousness a sort of certainty peculiar to itself. It is possible for me, when I see a rose, for example, to doubt that there is any real rose, external to myself: I may hold the vision to be something ideal simply; but it is not possible for me to doubt the fact of consciousness—I at any rate see the appearance of a rose. It is so with all the facts of consciousness. I may doubt, as philosophers have doubted from of old, whether there be objects external to myself. It is not possible for me to doubt that the appearance as of such objects is present to my consciousness. All this succession of facts or appearances which seem to be flowing onward for me in a perpetual stream may possibly be a mere phantasmagoria: its suggestions of an external world may be illusory; but at any rate the facts or appearances are there.

As this term "the consciousness" plays a very important part in metaphysics, it is necessary that we should from the outset have a clear notion as to what we mean by it.

It is extremely difficult, however, if not impossible, to define the consciousness, as it would be to define the simpler perceptions, such as any primitive colour; consciousness being the only mode in which we ourselves continually think and perceive, so that, for us to stand apart from it, and contemplate it from the outside, we ought to have a nature different from our own.

Would it be possible to explain it in the way of analogy? We might say that a man's consciousness should be com-

pared to that surface of coloured light which is made by the sunbeams impinging upon the earth. The beams, we may suppose, travel through the spaces of æther in darkness ; the earth without the beams is dark also ; yet there is this quality about these two dark substances, that, at every point at which they come into contact with each other, light is evolved ; and thus, of the points at which these beams are variously broken, is made up the painted surface of the earth, and of the heavens, the sole objects of human vision. In a somewhat similar way,—if for the moment we assume without proof the real objective existence of a self and an external universe or not-self,—it appears that these two dark and latent substances, of natures which in their essence are absolutely unknown to us, do somehow impinge upon one another, and at every point of contact the intellectual light of consciousness is evolved ; and, as we live on, these points multiply and spread, until at last there gathers about us a long, many-coloured, various, conscious experience, a wealth of internal life, which in its aggregate makes up the sum of all we know, and think, and mentally perceive and feel, just as the coloured surface of the sunlight makes up the whole of what our eyes see in the daytime.

In consciousness, we are at one and the same moment conscious of a certain object, whether perception, remembrance, fancy, or abstract or purely rational notion, and of a certain faculty or activity of ourselves, which is busied about that object. These two things, the object and the subject of consciousness, are most intimately connected together in every datum or act of consciousness ; it is perhaps hardly possible for us to think of either as existing apart from the other : still, it is in our power to direct our attention, at one time principally to the objective, at another principally to the subjective, [ingredient in this

complex act of consciousness. It is the subjective element—the faculty of being conscious—which no doubt originally gave its name to the entire operation. The term “consciousness” implies a quality inherent in some substance, of being conscious,—*i.e.*, of at once knowing, and knowing that it knows,—of having a certain power of reflex action about its own operations. Thus the very grammatical form of the word implies a belief that there is a self, or substance, of whose properties this being conscious is one.

It would be convenient, perhaps, if there were some other term to denote the objective contents of consciousness,—the aggregate of the phenomena of which we are conscious. At the same time, the fact that there is no such term in use, is not without significance. It indicates the peculiar closeness of union which exists between the act of being conscious and the object matter of consciousness. This is a point which it will be necessary to consider more in detail by and bye. There are, on this subject, two extreme views. One is, that of Professor Ferrier, to which reference has already been made,—*viz.* that the two ingredients are actually inseparable in thought. The other is that of Reid, who ascribes the cognizance of objects to one faculty, and the cognizance of one's own mental activity in taking cognizance of objects, to another separate faculty: narrowing the term consciousness to *self*-consciousness; and supposing a possibility of knowing an object, apart from the separate act—for such he considers it—of knowing that we know it.

“I am conscious,” says Reid, “of perception, but not of the object I perceive; I am conscious of memory, but not of the object I remember.”

Upon this view, every mental act whatever has a sort of double nature, being the result of two distinct sets of

faculties. When I look at a chair, my consciousness—according to Reid—informs me that I am undergoing the mental state of looking at a chair, while some other faculty informs me what the chair looks like. When I remember a matter which took place yesterday, consciousness acquaints me with the fact that I am remembering in some special manner, but it is some other faculty which informs me what the thing is which I am remembering. And so on of imagining, of pure thinking, and all the other phenomena of conscious life.

Reid's doctrine on this point is assailed by Hamilton in his 12th and 13th Lectures on Metaphysics.

In imagining, for example, we must have an object imagined, and this object may be such as has no existence out of the mind,—*e.g.*, a centaur. When we imagine a centaur, can it be said that we are conscious of imagining a centaur, but are not conscious of the centaur imagined? "Nothing can be more evident," says Hamilton, "than that the object and the act of imagination are identical. What is the act of imagining a centaur but the centaur imaged, or the image of the centaur; what is the image of the centaur but the act of imagining it? The centaur is both the object and the act of imagination; it is the same thing viewed in different relations, just as a square is the same figure, whether we consider it as composed of four sides, or as composed of four angles, or as paternity is the same relation whether we look from the son to the father, or from the father to the son" (Hamilton, Lect. Metaph., i. 214).

Hamilton commences his refutation of Reid with the act of imagination, as being the simplest, because in it the object of which we are conscious need have no existence but in the mind imagining. The act of imagining is not accompanied by a belief that the thing imagined either

exists now or ever did exist. But, when this difference between imagining and either perceiving or remembering is allowed for, the same objection to Reid's doctrine holds good in the case of perceiving or of remembering. It is not possible, in either of these phenomena, to distinguish, —as independent facts, such as can with any propriety be regarded as the results of two separate powers,—the being conscious of some special mental modification, and the modification itself of which we are conscious. They may be distinguished, indeed, as being the same thing regarded from different points of view ; but that is all.

In like manner, in pure thinking, and in being conscious of one's own states of feeling, past or present, the subjective state of being conscious, and the thing or object of which we are immediately conscious, are shown by Hamilton to be only two different aspects of the same thing.

What has here been said concerning consciousness may suffice to explain what it is, and why it is the true starting point of metaphysics.

It is always to be understood that it is each man's individual consciousness which is the starting point for himself. The speaker or writer expresses himself from his own point : the hearer or the reader is to interpret what is uttered by a constant reference to his own.

CHAPTER II.

OF AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS.

I am supposed, then, to have taken my stand upon this middle ground between the self and the non-self, my own consciousness. I recognize the fact of this various, parti-coloured, succession of appearances or realities which are following one another as if upon a theatre at which I am a spectator.

So far, I feel myself to be on secure ground. When once I have grasped the meaning of the term consciousness, there is no room for doubt as to its real existence subjectively to myself. Whatever be the nature of this stream of conscious life which is for ever flowing forward within or before me, the fact is certain, that the stream *is* flowing on. I do not at present say "*cogito, ergo sum,*" but "*cogitationes sunt.*"

But I desire to make some advance from this starting point. How is this to be done?

Probably the first step to be taken is to make an orderly classification of the data or facts which go to make up this aggregate, my consciousness. If the data unquestionably exist while yet in the pre-scientific state, when they are mixed together confusedly, having no recognised relation to one another except that of chronological sequence, they must exist none the less certainly after they have been methodized. That is, it must be so, provided there is no loss of truth or certainty in the mere process of classifying,

a point which will have to be considered towards the close of the present chapter.

I.—One convenient sub-division of the data of consciousness is, into cognitions and non-cognitions.

When I have a perception through the senses—when I see, hear, or taste,—there are in this fact two distinct ingredients, which, however inseparable in themselves, inasmuch as I cannot see, hear, or taste, in this special manner, without the presence of both, yet are separable as objects of thought. One of these ingredients is the knowledge—the other is the pleasure or pain—which comes to me through the sensation. That these two are separable in thought may be clearly seen, if it be considered that, as a matter of fact, the two ingredients are usually found to be in inverse ratios to one another in our sensations. Those senses which are the most instructive carry with them the least mixture of pleasure or pain. The sight teaches us more than the palate or the nose; but the purely physical pleasure which we derive through the eye is feeble when compared with the effects of those other senses.

Of these ingredients of sensational apprehension, the former, the purely cognitive, is in the language of metaphysicians usually styled the perception,—the latter, the sensation.

Sir W. Hamilton points out the inconvenience of using the same term, "perception," to denote at once the faculty by which we perceive and the individual act of perceiving; and he prefers that we should employ the term "percept" to distinguish the latter. This seems a convenient course.

The term "pleasure or pain," here used to denote that part of the datum of consciousness which is not a cognition may perhaps not be sufficiently exact or comprehensive. It is only taken for want of a better phrase. I perceive

an object. In so doing, I am conscious of a certain cognition, *i.e.* I learn something—I acquire a certain knowledge, whether it be that such or such an object exists, that it is of a given colour, of such a degree of hardness, or the like—no matter what. This is one portion of what I experience in this act. It is not, however—at any rate it may not be—the whole. Over and above the knowing, there is, in many acts of consciousness, a certain purely sensational ingredient, which carries with it something of either pleasure or pain. As the former is distinguished by the term cognition, or act of knowing; so the latter, of which we know only that it is non-cognitive, may be distinguished by the term Feeling.

To define what Knowing is, and what Feeling is, and wherein the two differ, would be as impracticable, and fortunately also as unnecessary, as to define what we mean by the colours red and blue and their difference. The former, like the latter, are primary intuitions, and can be traced no further back.

The non-cognitive portion of the data may further be distributed under Feelings and Volitions. We are conscious not merely of passively undergoing pleasure and pain, but also of having within ourselves a certain active force, which originates instead of being only worked upon.

Thus we have the threefold division of consciousness, adopted by Hamilton, into Cognitions, Feelings, and Volitions.

It is not affirmed that these three operations, thinking, feeling, and acting, make up the whole of conscious human life: there may be other modes of consciousness not comprehended under any one of them; but these constitute three great well-defined classes or branches, under which it is convenient to distribute the study of the laws of consciousness.

II.—In the next place, confining our attention to the cognitive element of consciousness, and proceeding with our task of classifying, we may sub-divide the cognitions under the following heads :—

Presentations.....1. Percepts, or external presentations.

2. Internal presentations.

Representations...3. Remembrances.

4. Acts of imagination.

Notions5. Thought proper.

1. *Percepts*.—A percept may be defined—the cognitive element in an act of sensation. To certain portions of the data of consciousness there is annexed a belief that the datum indicates, or rather is, a coming into contact with something which is not one's-self. When I touch, or see, an object, I am irresistibly impelled to believe that in the very act of seeing or touching there is a species of juxtaposition between the mind which apprehends and the object, foreign to the mind, which is apprehended. The precise extent and the significance of this belief must be reserved for future consideration ; at present, the fact has simply to be noted, since the belief in question constitutes the criterion by which perceptions are distinguished from other data of consciousness.

2. *Acts of internal presentation*.—By internal presentation is to be understood perception directed inwards upon oneself. When I am directly conscious of being happy, or suffering, or angry, or, in short, experiencing any emotion, or of putting forth any act of will, I appear in the act of mentally surveying that state of my own self, to be in direct mental juxtaposition with some particular state of my mind, in a manner closely analogous to that juxtaposition with an external object which takes place when I see or touch it.

These two states of consciousness, having much in com-

mon with one another, are classed together by Hamilton under the name of Presentations. In both, the object, whether external to the self, or a mere affection or modification of the self, appears to be *presented* immediately to the consciousness. It does not recal or refer back to something else, but is a thing original and complete in itself.

3. *Remembrances*.—Remembrance, when in its most perfect state, appears to be a species of reproduction, more or less incomplete, of some perception or internal presentation formerly experienced. More precisely stated, a remembrance is a presentation which is accompanied by a belief that there has preceded it in time some other presentation, to which the datum itself, the second presentation, bears some kind of imperfect resemblance. The remembrance, then; is properly termed a “re-presentation;” since it is necessarily accompanied by a belief that it is a second presentation of that which has been presented to our consciousness before.

The peculiar relation which remembrances bear to Time, will be considered more at large hereafter; as will also be the distinctive difference between percepts and remembrances, as to their relation to the self,—viz., that a percept is believed to involve the cooperation of the not-self, while a remembrance is believed to be an act of the self alone.

It is further to be observed that there may be remembrances, not only of percepts or self-intuitions, but also of other remembrances, and even of pure thoughts.

4. *Imaginations*.—It will be found upon a close examination, that what we commonly call imagining is simply remembrance stripped of the belief in the past actual existence of the thing remembered. This psychological fact will of course require proof, and is at present only stated hypothetically. It will appear, however, that in

the wildest play of our imagination, every one of the ingredients has at some former time been supplied either through perception or through internal presentation. We have the faculty to take the visionary part, so to term it, of remembrance apart from the belief which is its complement; and, having done so, to recombine at will, or at least after laws entirely different from the laws which govern our remembrances, these visionary portions into new forms, which may or may not have counterparts in the world of presentation. We can imagine a centaur, though we never have perceived nor can remember one; but we could not imagine one, had we not perceived, or were we unable to remember, those parts of man and horse which by their fancied combination make up the imagined centaur.

In this sense remembrances and imaginations fall under the same class, since both carry us back to some former perception, or direct presentation, of which each is a species of repetition. For this reason, both are styled acts of representation.

5. *Thoughts*.—The last of these subdivisions consists of thoughts, properly so called. These are distinguished from representations, partly at least, by their symbolical character. A thought or notion is denoted by a word, and thenceforth, in all mental operations conversant about that notion, the word, or mark set upon it, is used in place of the thing signified. By this means mental operations are facilitated, much in the same way as in the symbolical language of algebra.

We may have notions, where representations are not possible. Thus we may have notions of classes, as men or dogs; while classes cannot be represented, because to represent we must imagine details, which may not belong to the class as such. We may have notions of relations, as

such, or of negatives; neither of which can be represented.

It is not necessary here to anticipate what can be more clearly understood and more amply discussed at a later stage, when we come to treat of Notions. Without at present entering upon any controverted points, it is enough to say that, under one name or another, as ideas, conceptions, or notions, there is pretty generally recognized the existence of a mode of consciousness, different in kind from the acts of perceiving, self-intuition, remembering, or imagining. To this fifth mode belongs the whole work of discourse or reasoning.

This, then, is one way of subdividing the cognitive element of consciousness. It is not necessary to affirm that it is exhaustive: there may be modes of cognition which do not fall under any one of these classes; but these classes correspond to broad and clearly defined differences of mode, which it is convenient to consider separately.

Let us now revert to the question which at the outset of this chapter was reserved for further consideration, viz., Have I, in thus reducing some of the data of my consciousness under classes, parted with any portion of that absolute certainty with which I was able to affirm for myself the existence of the data? Have I, in the act of classifying, introduced any new element, in which it is possible that there may lurk some cause of error or uncertainty?

In the process of classification, two faculties, or modes of conscious activity, have been employed, and two only. One is, the faculty by which we discern likeness or unlikeness between two objects, *i.e.*, comparison; the other is, memory. Given these two powers, a complete classification of the data of a man's own consciousness, so far as those data have been evolved, up to the time of classifying,

is possible: take away either, and it is not. That the faculty of comparison is essential, is self-evident. Memory also is requisite; for, although within some very narrow limits comparison may be made between two simultaneous percepts,—*e.g.*, when we have two objects within the same orbit of vision, and near enough for direct comparison,—yet, to have anything approaching to a system of classification, the great majority of the acts of comparison must be, either the comparison of a presentation with a remembrance, or of one remembrance with another.

Is it conceivable, then, that, for the work here in hand, the faculty of comparison, or that of memory, should be itself untrustworthy?

If there be any difficulty in answering this question, it can only arise from a doubt as to whether the objects of the classification should be considered as having any sort of objective existence as distinguished from their subjective existence in consciousness.

When it is a question whether my faculties are trustworthy,—as, whether my senses report the external realities such as they truly are, whether my memory is faithful, whether the reasoning faculties are reliable,—the very proposing of the question implies the existence of two distinct sets of facts,—things as they are, and things as they are thought. For it is a question about the truthfulness of a belief or opinion: in other words, about the relation, whether of correspondency or otherwise, which that belief or opinion bears to something else. The very thing which we mean, when we say that a belief is true, is, that it corresponds with the actual fact; which, of course, must be something other than the belief itself.

Now there is a certain sense in which the data of consciousness, when compared together for the purpose of classification, are, in the act of comparison, treated as

objects, having an existence other than, and which consequently may or may not correspond with, the datum immediately present to the mind in the act of comparison. This results from the fact that the comparison is carried on through the medium of remembrances.

When we compare together two objects, one of which we see, while the other is merely recalled by memory, and say of them that they are alike, or that they differ in this or that respect, we do not mean that the two data of consciousness, the visual perception and the remembrance, are alike, nor yet do we bring in this difference,—that one is seen while the other is remembered,—as constituting a difference of the objects. This is a matter of fact which every one can test for himself. We, on the contrary, think of the objects which we are comparing as being, so to speak, mentally equidistant from ourselves. In our judgments concerning such objects, we eliminate, as a circumstance that has nothing to do with the nature of the objects themselves, the special mode in which they may for the moment be related to our consciousness. In this manner we objectify, or mentally set apart from ourselves, the things between which we make a comparison: thus proving that we think of them as having an existence which is in some way independent of the special mode in which we may be apprehending them in this or that act of consciousness.

From these general principles, we can arrive at a conclusion upon the question now before us,—whether, in classifying the data of consciousness, it is conceivable that either the process of comparison, or that of recollection, which is requisite for this work, should be deceptive or untrustworthy.

With regard to comparison, it is not easy to see how this can be so. The act of comparing one datum with

another appears to be purely subjective. Data of my consciousness which seem to me alike, are alike; those which seem to me unlike, are unlike: the being and the seeming are, in this connexion, one and the same thing.¹ It is not possible, then, to predicate discrepancy or untruth, nor yet truth, concerning acts of comparison when made between data of my consciousness, regarded simply as such. To talk of likeness or unlikeness as it is, as something other than likeness or unlikeness as it seems, would be a mere unmeaning combination of words.

But with regard to recollection, the case is otherwise. When we compare together, for the purpose of classification, two or more data of consciousness, we regard them, as has been said, as objects—subjective-objects, indeed, as they are styled by Hamilton, by way of contradistinction from objects viewed as they are apart from and externally to our consciousness,—still, as objects having a sort of existence other than the mere immediate act of reminiscence by which they are represented to the mind at the moment of comparison. They are, then, objects represented through a medium, namely, through remembrance; and, this being so, the validity of the comparison of the objects must be contingent upon the fidelity of the medium. Unless the memory be a faculty which is trustworthy, we can have no security that a classification of the data of consciousness is truthful: for such a classification purports to be the methodized registry, not of shifting remembrances, but of mental phenomena—data—which, though they now exist for us only in the form of objects remembered, were objects of a nature very different, some of them, from recollections.

¹ It is hardly necessary to point out that the data of consciousness are here spoken of in their subjective aspect only. Whether the things themselves—the objects—which excite in me impressions which are similar, are themselves similar, is a distinct question, to be considered in another place.

It will be shown, as we proceed, that we have no guarantee for the general truthfulness of memory, except our belief—which we shall find to be a primary belief—that it is truthful,—that, speaking generally, when certain allowance has been made for errors arising from our position in the act of remembering, or for deficiencies arising either from forgetfulness or imperfect attention, the thing remembered corresponds with the remembrance itself. It will be shown, further, that this unexplained belief in the fidelity of memory is a belief of precisely the same intellectual rank and value as our belief in the existence of an external world.

Supposing these propositions to be made out,—that no valid classification of the data of consciousness, even as data merely, can be made, unless we can rely upon the veraciousness of memory; that our reliance upon the veraciousness of memory is the result solely of an inexplicable primary belief; and that another belief, equally inexplicable and primary, and entitled to precisely the same degree of credence, certifies to us the existence of an external world, directly apprehended by us in perception; enough will have been done to convict of inconsistency those idealist, or quasi-idealist philosophies, which, whilst denying the existence of an external world for want of evidence, yet confidently frame classifications of the data of consciousness, and give forth those classifications as systems of demonstrative truth.

CHAPTER III.

PRESENTATIONS (EXTERNAL).

WE have, then, these two points settled,—that the data of our consciousness are realities to ourselves—each man here speaking for himself; and that (subject to one proviso) no portion of the absolute certainty with which we affirm this is lost in the process of arranging these data under classes. That proviso is, that we accept as a postulate the general veraciousness of our faculty of memory.

Let us in the next place proceed to carry this analysis of the cognitions a little further. Let us, if we can, mark out the precise boundary lines between presentations, representations, and thoughts or notions.

Presentations are either external or internal. We may begin with external presentations, or perceptions.

A perception, as has been said, is the cognitive portion or aspect of that which takes place in any of our sensations,—in the act of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, or the like. It is an aspect or portion: consequently it can contain nothing which is not also contained in the sensation itself. But every sensation—unless we are greatly deceived—comes to us through, or under the conditions of, some one single sense or organ of communication with the not-self. That which we learn through the eye has in itself nothing in common with that which we learn through the touch. If these two distinct species of sensation are brought to cooperate together with reference to any given object, so that we are able to say of that object that it is at the same moment perceived by us to be, *e.g.*,

red and hard, then that which brings together these two distinct perceptions, so that both are known to apply to one and the same object, must be, not a perception (percept), but something else.¹

Similarly, if the presence of one percept shall have the effect of calling up the remembrance of some percept belonging to a different sense, and the percept and the remembrance shall be connected together as both belonging to the same object, these two processes—the suggestion of a reminiscence, and the connecting of it with the object perceived, must be, not perceptions, but mental acts generically other than percepts.

If it be asked, on what grounds this is affirmed, there seems to be no better answer at hand than that it is because we believe so. We say that we are perceiving, or undergoing a sensation, only when we at the same moment believe that, however little we can explain the manner how, there is a sort of contact or direct intercourse between our self and a something which is not our self. In the simple act of sensation, we are conscious of such contact: in the process of connecting one sensation with another, different in kind, or of connecting a sensation with the remembrance of a dissimilar sensation, we are conscious that no such contact takes place.

This belief, that in sensation there is a species of contact between the self and the non-self, must be considered more fully in a subsequent chapter, when we come to discuss Hamilton's doctrine of Natural Realism. Let it in the

¹ If that only is a visual percept which comes through seeing, and that only a tactual percept which comes through touching, and if the acts of seeing and touching have, considered in themselves, nothing in common, it must follow that the apprehension of the oneness of the object seen and touched, as that oneness is not seen nor yet touched, cannot be a tactual percept nor yet a visual percept, and, no other sense being in question, cannot be a percept at all,—must therefore be a mode of mental apprehension different in kind from a percept.

meantime be assumed that the criterion by which we distinguish a percept from every other cognitive act is, the presence in the former, and the absence in the latter, of a certain inexplicable belief or consciousness that the perceiving self comes into immediate contact with a something which is external to it; and we shall then be led to the following corollaries:—

1st. That which is only learnt by inference from a percept is no part of the percept itself.

Thus when, seeing smoke, we infer the existence of fire, this cognition of the fire does not come to us as a percept.

2nd. That which is only learnt by comparison of two or more percepts, is not itself a percept.

For, that only is a percept which can be assigned to some single sense as its cause.

For example, it is set down by Hamilton as a doubtful point whether from touch alone, unaided by sight, it is possible to obtain a knowledge of the form of any but perhaps very small and simple objects. "Let any one," he says, "try by touch to ascertain the figure of a room, with which he is previously unacquainted, and not altogether of the usual shape, and he will find that touch will afford him but slender aid:" and to find out by feeling the figure of the Peak of Teneriffe, or St. Peter's at Rome, would, he says, be impossible (Reid, p. 133). Sight alone, unaided at any time by touch or the remembrance of touch, would be absolutely incompetent to give us a knowledge of solid form. Assuming, then, that our knowledge of solid form comes only through touch and sight combined, this knowledge must involve as one of its causes a process of comparison. Consequently, on this assumption, our knowledge of this or that solid form can in no case be styled a percept.

3rd. If an object is known to be one and the same,

although we are at the same moment conscious of two distinct and dissimilar percepts which we refer to that object, our knowledge of the oneness of the object is not itself a percept.

For, there is required a process or act of thought, which for the reasons above given is different in kind from a percept, to connect together the two percepts as both belonging to the same object.

4th. If we ascribe a oneness to an object which we now perceive, and which we also remember to have perceived formerly, our knowledge of this oneness is not a percept.

For, in the same manner as in the preceding case, a process of thought is requisite, to connect together the percept and the remembrance.

5th. That which can only be known by subdivision of a percept, is not itself a percept.

For, such knowledge requires as its condition an act of thought, distinct in kind from a percept, namely, the act of subdivision.

This principle, in its terms, is inapplicable to the case in which an object, though in fact perceived as the portion of a larger object, may possibly be perceived when it has been divided off from that of which it previously formed a part. Thus, I am at this moment perceiving a sheet of paper: any little piece that might be torn off from it, though not in fact now perceived as an object by itself, yet would be so perceived when torn off. My knowledge of its existence is consequently a percept. But it is otherwise with the mathematical figures—the lines—length without breadth—which I know, but do not perceive, to form the outer boundaries of every stroke of ink which is on the page. For, I only know of their existence by separating, by an act of thought, the length and the breadth, which in every percept exist conjointly.

CHAPTER IV.

PRESENTATIONS (INTERNAL).

It would be a great mistake to suppose that we have simply to direct our attention inwards, as it were, upon our own selves, in order that this self should at once exhibit itself to us, fully and completely, such as it is in its essence. If any one believes that he can do this, let him make the experiment.

It will be found, on the contrary, that our knowledge concerning our own selves is closely analogous to our knowledge concerning the external world. What the latter is in itself, we either are wholly ignorant of, or can only infer from the effects which it produces on our consciousness: and those effects can only be learnt by observations first made through the senses, and then stored up in and reproduced by memory, and combined or otherwise manipulated by processes of thought. Thus it may be said that the only portion of the external world as to which we can know anything is that surface of it which comes into immediate contact with our own minds. Very much of the same kind, *mutatis mutandis*, is our knowledge concerning our own selves. What I am in myself, I am wholly ignorant of, except so far as I can draw inferences from those thoughts, feelings, and other manifestations of internal activity which may be termed acts or products of the self. No one of those acts or products is the self, nor is the aggregate of them the self: we conceive the self to be the

cause of them. And this latent or unknown cause can only be studied through observation of these its effects: which must be, first, by direct inward tuition, taking note of the acts or products one by one as they arise; and must afterwards be pushed further by a series of comparisons or other mental processes, bringing together these intuitions by remembrance, and noting their resemblances and differences and such other laws of their being as we can penetrate to.

Let us first consider the mental operation to which we may give the name of internal presentation, and inquire by what essential character it is distinguished from other data of consciousness.¹

When I feel that I am affected in some particular way,—that I am pleased, that I am angry, that I have some desire,—and when I direct my attention to this subjective state of feeling, the cognitive ingredient in this mental

¹ Our faculty of immediately apprehending the phases or acts of our self bears so close an analogy to our faculty of external sensation, that it might fitly be termed an internal sense: the cognitive aspect of it might be termed internal perception, and the individual acts of thus apprehending might be termed internal percepts. As, however, this use of the terms sensation and perception might mislead, or be deemed objectionable for its novelty, it may be preferable to employ the phrase “internal presentation,” in the absence of a recognized single word to denote this particular mode of consciousness. Hamilton employs the term “self-consciousness” in this sense; but this seems objectionable, as apt to mislead in two ways; first, because it is not the self, but the acts of the self, of which we are conscious; and, secondly, because the adoption of this term seems to encourage that which Hamilton himself would probably regard as the vulgar error of regarding self-consciousness as being more peculiarly and properly consciousness than is the consciousness of the not-self. The term “intuition” has also suggested itself as suitable for the purpose; but this term we shall require by and bye for another purpose, viz., to denote that class of phenomena which has for its sub-divisions presentations and representations. We shall see that all our cognitions must be sub-divided under intuitions and notions; presentations and representations having so much in common, as contradistinguished from notions, that we shall need some common term to comprehend both. Failing to discover a better phrase, therefore, and not venturing, without absolute necessity, to coin a word, or to use an old word in a new sense, I content myself with the cumbersome expression “internal presentation.”

act, namely, the apprehension or knowledge-taking of the emotion or other affection of the self, is that which is here termed an internal presentation.

The affection of the self which is thus apprehended may be either an emotion, a volition, or a particular act of cognition. So long as the thing apprehended is the subjective element in the act,—*i.e.* the cognition in so far as it is an act or state of the self,—the act of taking immediate cognizance of it is an internal presentation.

Much in the same way as in every act of perception I am conscious of somehow coming into contact with a something external to myself, so in every internal presentation I am conscious of somehow coming into a mental contact with an inner force or activity which I term my self. Why or how it is that I am led to entertain this twofold belief, I do not at present stay to inquire. In a future chapter, when we come to consider that which may be termed the Law of Substance, this inquiry may be pursued further. At present, it is enough to state the existence of this belief as a fact. If there is any one who is not conscious of having this belief, he may question the fact; and no one else has the right to do so. I find myself conscious of thus believing; and I can see abundant proof, in the very structure of all known languages, that this belief is held by, at all events, the vast majority of mankind. No exception has ever presented itself to my experience, nor am I aware that any such is on record. I seem to be warranted, therefore, in considering this belief to be nothing exceptional or peculiar in me.

Again, I am sometimes conscious of exercising a faculty which is distinct in kind from that of internal presentation; that is, I can remember former presentations. How far I can do this at will, or whether the rising up of these remembrances is wholly involuntary, I do not here consider.

It is enough to know that, among the data of my consciousness, I recognize the existence, sometimes of presentations, sometimes of remembrances of presentations.

Every remembrance, whether of a perception or of an internal presentation, is an act of a twofold nature, or having two ingredients which may be separated in thought although in fact they always exist in combination. It is at once a presentation and a representation. That which is *presented* is, the fact that I am remembering so and so; that which is *represented* is, the fact that so and so formerly took place. It is a presentation which recalls some other presentation.

Now, if we confine our attention to the former of the two ingredients—to the presentative aspect of the remembrance—we must regard it as a species of internal presentation; and this, whether the thing remembered be a percept or a state of mind. The fact of remembering is itself a state of our own mind, or an act of the self. But if, instead of thus isolating one portion of the fact of remembrance, we treat that fact as a whole, we must see that it is not a mere internal presentation, but is a datum distinct in kind from every other. The remembrance, taken as a whole, is a mental reproduction (with certain specific differences, concerning which more is to be said hereafter) of some perception or internal presentation which has preceded it in time.

Let us now proceed a step further.

Suppose I wish to classify my internal presentations,—or, what is the first step towards doing so, suppose that, having a particular presentation, I wish to determine whether it is a new thing, felt by me for the first time, or whether it resembles any former internal presentation of mine,—how am I to ascertain this?

I can think of no other way of accomplishing it, except

by calling up remembrances of former presentations, and comparing the two together by an act of thought.

I find that I am capable of this act of thought. I can bring two remembrances, be they of perceptions or of internal presentations (for in respect of this capability there is no difference between them), into a species of mental juxtaposition, and can then determine whether they are like or unlike one another. This mental process is called an act of comparison.

Now a comparison, like a remembrance, has a twofold nature. It is a presentation, inasmuch as, at the moment of making it, I am directly conscious of the act as a state of my mind. But it is also more than a presentation, inasmuch as I am at the same time mediately or indirectly conscious of the two objects of thought which are being compared; that is to say, I know that those two objects formerly existed as presentations to me. In comparison, then, as in remembrance, I can, if I please, isolate in thought the presentative element, and consider it as existing in itself; and, thus regarded, the act of comparison is for me a species of presentation. But I can also, if I prefer it, consider the act as a whole; and then it is something generically different from a presentation; for it necessarily carries with it two acts of remembrance, and something more, viz., the bringing of the two into one act of thought and discerning a likeness or unlikeness between them.

From what has here been said concerning internal presentations, one can readily understand how it is that such a presentation is not so obvious or distinctly marked a phenomena as is a perception. For, there is some ingredient or aspect of presentation connected with every datum of consciousness whatever. A pure or unmixed internal presentation is, when we apprehend a simple modification

of ourselves, such as a feeling or emotion. But there is also an internal presentation involved in every percept : since in the very act of perception we are at once conscious of the contact or presence of something external, and also of some activity of our self, *i.e.*, of an internal presentation. In every representation, whether it be a remembrance or an act of imagination, there is indeed, as has been shown, something more than a presentation ; but there exists likewise a presentative element : and it is the same with every act of comparison. When we are either perceiving, imagining, or thinking, we are at every moment conscious, or at least capable of being conscious, of a present activity of the self : so that either an internal presentation or the material so to speak of such a presentation, is present with us at every moment of our life.

We can, however, always distinguish in thought between the presentation and the other ingredients, whenever there are such, of any given datum of consciousness. The question arises, how is it that we can do this—by what criterion do we distinguish it ?

The criterion appears to be involved in the question, am I conscious, at any given moment, of the then present activity, of my self ? If I am, this consciousness, so far as it extends, is an internal presentation.

The test of a percept is, whether I am at any given moment conscious of the then present action of the not-self upon the self, or of the self upon the not-self.

That which is here termed, for both these cases, the “being conscious,” might have been termed the “believing.” If we can trace no further, it certainly is a belief,—having all those marks of a primary belief which have been already pointed out,—that, when we are conscious of experiencing (for example) some emotion, we are conscious at the same time of a present activity of our self, and,

when we are conscious of seeing or touching, we are at the same time conscious of a then present action of self upon not-self, or not-self on self. But it may be questioned whether this twofold conviction should not be described rather as a direct cognition than a belief.

Apart from, and anterior in order of time to, any theoretical notions concerning a self or a not-self, there must be a specific difference between the data of consciousness called respectively perception and internal presentation,—a difference of which we are always conscious ; otherwise we should not know, at any given moment, whether that which we were undergoing were a perception or an internal presentation. It may be that this difference, like the difference between two colours, is an apperception so primitive that it cannot be expressed in any simpler form. Or, the case may be otherwise.

It may perhaps not improperly be thrown out as a conjecture, to be verified or overthrown at a more advanced stage in our enquiries, that the specific difference which marks off an internal presentation from every other kind of datum of consciousness, is, its being accompanied by that peculiar nervous susceptibility to which we give the name of pleasure or pain. It is certain that this susceptibility is annexed to the phenomena of time present, and not either to those of time past or time future. The remembrance or the anticipation of pain may indeed carry with it something painful ; but this is probably only in the same degree as the act of remembrance, or of anticipation, is a presentative act. The purely cognitional portion of the remembrance or anticipation has no feeling annexed to it. Again, to a great extent pleasure and pain may be transformed, when the objects which have excited them have ceased to be present. The recollection of former hardships may even be a source of pleasure. “*Dulce est*

olim meminisse dolores." So that, on the whole, this cerebral or nervous excitation, pleasure or pain, appears to run parallel, as to time, with the presentative portion of our consciousness. And it is annexed to the internal, not the external, portion of the consciousness; for we are always conscious that, though external objects may *cause* pleasure or pain, yet it is our own pleasure or pain,—the pleasure or pain is something in or of our self. From these two propositions, that pleasure or pain always accompanies and only accompanies internal presentations, it may be inferred that it is the existence of pleasure or pain which serves to mark for us the existence of internal presentations, or the internally presentative element in the data of our consciousness. This however is only stated conjecturally, and is not perhaps a matter of any great importance. What is material is, that which cannot be doubted, that we are in fact capable of distinguishing with certainty between internal presentations and perceptions.

An internal presentation, then, must be defined as that datum of consciousness which is believed or felt to be an immediate act or state of the self.

It remains to be considered whether we can apply to internal presentation rules of limitation analogous to those which in the preceding chapter have been laid down with respect to perception. The several acts of mentally bringing into juxtaposition, and ascribing to the same or to diverse objects, two or more perceptions numerically distinct from one another, of drawing inferences from one perception as to another fact which is held to be the cause of it, and of making comparisons or founding argument upon comparison, were there shown to constitute no part of the percepts themselves. Is there a corresponding truth with regard to internal presentations?

I am conscious of being angry, and I am conscious of

having been pleased half an hour ago : these two data are internal presentations, the first pure, the second forming a portion of a remembrance. I ascribe these two acts of consciousness to one and the same sentient subject or cause, viz., my self. Thus I connect the two in one act of thought, as both being states or acts of my self. Can it be said that this connecting act of thought is itself an internal presentation ?

From what was said above, it is clear that it is an act which contains or carries with it an internal presentation, precisely to the same extent as a simple act of comparison. In so far as I am conscious of the connecting act of thought as a present state or act of my self, to that extent, and to that extent only, is that act an internal presentation.

It is obvious, then, that this act of thought by which I connect together, as both belonging to myself, the present anger and the former pleasure, is not either the consciousness of the anger or the consciousness of the pleasure, but a third distinct mental act. It is not pure internal presentation, as the consciousness of the anger is ; nor is it mere remembrance, as is the consciousness of the past pleasure ; but it involves a distinct element, which may be termed intelligential.

We may say, then, that that which brings together two internal presentations in one act of thought is a mental act, which is distinct (numerically different) from either of the two.

CHAPTER V.

R E P R E S E N T A T I O N S.

By a Representation is to be understood such a datum of consciousness as carries with it the belief or apperception that it is an imitative reproduction of some presentation which has preceded it in time.

The purpose of the following chapter, in continuation of our task of marking out the boundaries of the several classes of data, is to define in what manner representations are distinguished, on the one hand from percepts and internal presentations, and on the other from what Hamilton calls "the unpicturable notions of intelligence."

The distinctive character of representations may be most plainly seen in that species of them which consists of remembrances of visual percepts. From whatever cause it may proceed, the fact appears to be that objects of sight are those which can be most distinctly called up as an ideal image. It is perhaps not altogether from accident that the phrase "the mind's eye" has obtained currency, while such expressions as "the mind's ear" or "the mind's nose" only provoke a smile. We are sometimes very distinctly conscious of having before our mind's eye pictures of objects formerly seen. It seems probable that this faculty of bringing up visual images either can be greatly strengthened by training, or is possessed in a much higher degree by one man than another. In the strength of this faculty consists, partially at least, "the vision and the faculty divine" of the poet. A great portion of the pleasure with

which poetry is read or heard consists in the fact that, through association, the words used have the power of calling up visual images, more or less definite, of objects which either in themselves or in their combination are beautiful or picturesque. For this reason poetry is required by Bacon to be "sensuous." It would be pleasant enough, if the reader could be supposed to have time for such loitering, to bring forward some examples of the manner in which this painting with words takes place, from the presenting of a complete and highly elaborated picture to the arousing, by a single word, as in Dante's celebrated "*tremolar de la marina*," a species of half-image, as it were a glimpse caught in passing, sufficient to throw a sensuous tinge over the thought, such as the poet's purpose or humour may require. But after all it is not from poetry but from common every day life that examples of this faculty of forming visual images should be taken. Although the existence of it may be obscured, to persons little accustomed to analyse what passes within their own minds, by the more careful attention which they have accustomed themselves to give to "realities," that is, to external perceptions, or to abstract and severer thoughts, yet it must be easy, from many familiar instances, for each man to satisfy himself that he possesses and is always using this faculty. In dreams and reveries, or when one thinks of old times, images more or less distinct seem to come before us. But what puts the matter beyond all dispute is the fact that we recognize people and objects, when we see them, as having seen them before. We meet an old friend, and we tell him that he looks changed. What do we mean by that? Simply that we compare what we see before us with the image we had in our minds, and find such a general resemblance that we know they both belong to the same object, but also find certain dif-

ferences. But, to enable us to make the comparison, the image must have been there. It may have been so far in the background of our memory that nothing but the actual sight of the person himself could have brought it up again ; still it exists, and comes into use when wanted. In many cases it would seem that the appearance of the image is so sudden and fleeting as to leave no trace in one's memory except this one of the effect it has produced, viz., that we have used it to identify an object which we see.

Let us give the name of patent representations to those which have as it were an independent existence in our minds, which we call up more or less perfectly by a simple effort of volition, whether in the presence or absence of the objects they refer to ; and that of latent or obscure representations to those whose existence in our consciousness is only discovered from the effect produced by them, viz., that we identify objects seen as having been seen before. Latent representations play, it is evident, a most important part in the formation of a man's knowledge. It may be, and indeed seems highly probable, that there is no real difference in kind between patent and latent representations, but merely an accidental difference arising from a habit of inattention to the latter. It is well known that in great seclusion, imprisonment, or blindness, where there is leisure to brood over the past, images of objects which in a busy life had been supposed to be wholly forgotten come out often with very great distinctness. Here we have an example of latent representations being transmuted into patent, with no other difference in the antecedents except a greater degree of attention ; which seems to show that it is inattention—that wise or instinctive inattention which will not cumber the mind with that which will be useless to it—which has rendered so many of our representations latent.

Representation is not limited to objects of vision. Every presentation, whether sensible or internal, has its corresponding representation. Thus much may at least be conjectured from analogy even before examining inductively how the case stands in fact. But we are not left entirely to conjecture.

If we begin with patent representations, we find pretty clear proofs of the existence of such with relation to all the objects of sense. In some imperfect degree we can recal some sounds. We can perhaps remember the tones of some voice; that is to say, not merely remember some quality of the voice to which we can give a name, as, that it was loud or soft, sharp or grave; for in that case it may be that we are remembering a notion, not an intuition; but we can remember it so as in a manner to reproduce it to our mind if not to our ear,—we can bring it back with that undefined something, for which we have no name, that renders it different from every other voice.

“Music, when loved voices die,
Vibrates on the memory;
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken,”—

says Shelley; and on such a subject a poet is an authority, since the training of the imagination belongs to his art.¹ I do not know what power men may have to recal at will particular scents or savours, so as to have an impression of them which shall bear the same kind of relation to the respective sensations which images, remembered or imagined, of visual objects bear to the sensation of seeing. It seems, however, highly probable that this faculty exists and is capable of cultivation. With regard to the reproduction of internal presentations,—of feelings and all moods of the self,—we need go no further than to the theatre for an

¹ The same quotation, I find, has been made by Mr. Mansel.

illustration. If an actor does anything more than counterfeit the outward symbols of emotion, if he really "can force his soul so to his own conceit" as for a moment in some degree to feel the emotion which he is representing, the fact that he can by an effort of volition bring himself into this condition of feeling seems to prove that he must, previously to the exertion of this effort of volition, have an idea in his mind, or representation, of what that state of feeling is. But if so, it is the idea of something which he cannot define or express in words: it must be, then,—at any rate on the theory of Nominalism it must be,—something other than a notion or thought. It can only be, then,—unless some new mode of mental apprehension is suggested,—a representation. Very much in the same way as, if one who has heard a tune is able to repeat it by ear, we must hold that, whether he is distinctly conscious of the fact or no, that man must, before he begins to repeat it, have in his mind a model which he works after,—that is to say, the representation of that particular tune,—so the actor or the orator, who at a predetermined point in his work throws himself into a particular state of feeling, must, consciously or no, have already in his mind some model, or representation, of that feeling.

It can hardly be necessary to enlarge further upon this branch of the subject, either by multiplying illustrations or by combating objections which might possibly be raised to these which have been given. For, whatever difficulties may be made as to patent representations—and the subject certainly is obscure—there can be no doubt as to those which we have called latent. There is no presentation, external or internal, concerning which we are not able to affirm, either that we have felt its like before, or that it is something new, felt for the first time. If we ever hesitate about this,—if this power be not perfect in us,—we seem

to be conscious that the imperfectness can only proceed from our own partial forgetfulness, which we feel to be a sort of individual fault or deficiency. But, in the main, we are able, at once, and with certainty, upon experiencing any presentation whatever, to refer it to its proper class,—in other words, to throw it among a heap of remembered presentations to which we recognize its similarity. The fact that we can do this seems very simple, and yet, if properly considered, may be found to teach us a good deal.

If we recognize one thing as being identical with, or like, or unlike, some other thing, it is evident that we only do so by, or as the result of, an act of comparison. Now comparison is only possible for us between two objects which have some common ground, with reference to which they are compared. I cannot make any sort of comparison between a sight and a sound, except by referring both to that which they have in common, viz., that both are objects of sensational perception. I cannot compare a thought with a thing, except with reference to that which belongs alike to both, viz., that both are entities, or fall within the category of existence. Thus in proportion as the distance between two objects widens—as the two belong to more remote spheres of thought or existence—the number of points of comparison between them diminishes. Between a tulip and a rose there are many common grounds, and we can at will institute comparisons between them in reference to one or another of those grounds: we can compare them as coloured objects of vision, as objects of touch or scent, as flowers, as vegetables, as objects external to us, as entities. But a thing and a thought have between them only one common ground—as being entities.

Of these common grounds between two objects compared together, there is always one, which is that upon which the

comparison can be the most completely made ; and that is, the ground upon which we cease to discern the differences between the objects. For example, the true common ground of comparison between a tulip and a rose is the class Flower. In the act of comparing the two with relation to this class, we are obliged first to cognize that each belongs to the class ; for which purpose it is essential that we perceive in each every element or momentum which goes to the making up of our notion of a flower. Hence, in comparing the two together as flowers, we are compelled to bring into one act of thought a greater number, so to speak, of the qualities of those objects than when we are simply comparing them as vegetables, or as external objects, or as entities.

In the comparison of two objects which belong to the same class, we come as much closer as the class to which they belong is narrower. Two roses may be compared more closely than a rose and a tulip ; two moss-roses than two roses. For, before we come to the point of discerning differences, we have to establish the resemblance, viz., that each possesses all the attributes of the class, or sub-class, which is common to both. And of course, as we sub-divide the class, we increase the number of the attributes.

Let us now proceed to apply these principles to the matter in hand—the identifying or otherwise connecting of an object perceived with an object remembered.

It is in our power to recognize objects perceived as being identical with, or like, or unlike, objects remembered. How evanescent and impalpable soever be that vision which constitutes the bodily form of the remembrance, the fact of its having existed for us is recorded in the effect which is produced, viz., that we can identify an object perceived as having been perceived before.

For this purpose, then, it is necessary that there should

have been a comparison. In addition to the perception, there must have been a something else—call it representation or what one may—with which that perception has been compared. That comparison must have been very close; in other words, this something must have intimately resembled the percept. For, the percept together with its corresponding representation constitute together a class, from which every other percept and every other representation are excluded. Were it otherwise, it would not be possible so to connect together the percept and its representation, as to be able to identify the percept as the individual object represented, and no other. If, upon seeing the face of my friend, I know that it is the face of that individual man and no other, then it must follow that I possess in my mind a record or pattern of that face, which is stamped with every character which differences that one face from every other face amongst men. The face itself, and this pattern of it, must have attributes in common, which serve to distinguish the two from all other objects of my consciousness. I have the right, therefore, to put the two together in a class or sub-class composed of these two objects only. Thus the connection between the percept and its representation is very close indeed: and each of them must possess in common every attribute which distinguishes them from other objects of their respective kinds.

It is to be borne in mind that what is here said concerning visual percepts and their representations applies with equal force, *mutatis mutandis*, to all kinds of percepts, and likewise to internal presentations.

In order, however, fully to set forth the intuitive, or quasi sensuous, quality of representations, it is necessary to consider the matter a little more closely.

Supposing I am asked to compare, let us say, the redness

of two objects, one of which I see, and see to be red, while I do not see, and never have seen, the other, is there any way by which I can possibly do this? Certainly, I can do so through the ears in the way of comparison with some medium; as, if I am told that the unseen object is as red as a boiled lobster, or a ripe apple. Or, in the way of cause or effect, if I am told that it has been steeped for such a length of time in such a dye, or, that an object which it has rubbed against has been turned to such a tinge. Or, more simply, I may be told that the unseen object is scarlet. But, in all these cases, if I have never seen the object itself, I must in each instance have seen the object with which it is compared, *e.g.* a boiled lobster, or scarlet, or the supposed tinge, otherwise the explanation tells me nothing. Directly or indirectly, then, I can only compare the colours of two objects by seeing both of them. There is no species of community between one sense or another, or between sense and reason, such that a deficiency of one can be made good by another. Each sense is, within its own range, the mind's sole and single avenue to its appropriate knowledge. But to see, or to have seen, serve the same purpose of comparison. In other words, the representation of a visual object gives or contains a something which is so closely like seeing that it can take the place, and do the duty, of seeing, in a manner which cannot be done by any other sense, or any rational faculty, which we possess.

These arguments appear to show that latent representations share with presentations a peculiar, quasi-sensuous property, to which we may give the name of intuitiveness. With regard to those which we have termed patent, our consciousness directly, though perhaps a little indistinctly, informs us that the same thing holds good. Further, we have given some reasons for believing that there is no real

difference in kind between patent and latent representations.

Some apology is perhaps needed for having dwelt at so much length on the proofs of a proposition which is not very likely to be questioned. The fact is, so much confusion has arisen, in the study of metaphysics, from the want of a clear comprehension of the nature and limits of this peculiar class of mental phenomena, representations, or "idea-images," as they have sometimes been termed, that it is worth while to expend a little labour, if by so doing we can form some accurate and definite opinions on the subject.¹

What remains to be said concerning representations seems to offer little or no difficulty.

Let us now return to patent representations. These are of three kinds, which may be called, respectively, complete, incomplete, and modified representations. A complete representation is one which can be traced to its origin in sensational or internal presentation. An incomplete representation is one that cannot be thus traced, but exists in our minds we know not whence. A modified representation is one which we know to be partially the product of our own fancy, which has combined into one image parts which never existed combinedly in presentation.

Complete representations are remembrances. When I

¹ What are here called "idea-images" are regarded by some philosophers as—except presentations—the sole objects of thought. Thus Hume begins his *Treatise on Human Nature* with these words:—"All the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I shall call impressions and ideas. The difference between these consists in the degrees of force and liveliness with which they strike upon the mind, and make their way into our thought or consciousness. . . . The one seems to be in a manner the reflexion of the other; so that all the perceptions of the mind are double, and appear both as impressions and ideas" (pp. 11-14). Hume's sceptical conclusions flow directly from his assuming these two—presentations and representations; or, in his language, impressions and ideas—to be the sole ingredients of consciousness.

call up in my mind some particular image, and am at the same time conscious that it represents some object which I definitely remember to have seen or otherwise come into mental contact with at such or such a time, I find here, fully exhibited, the complete mental process, by which presentation is transmuted into and followed and recorded by representation.

But, if I begin to examine my stock of remembrances, I very quickly become conscious of the presence of a certain destructive element called forgetfulness. There seems to be a process of decay continually going on within the representative portion of my consciousness. This decay is twofold. I find a dimness gradually gathering over the idea-images themselves, so that, as they are more and more removed by lapse of time from the sensations which first aroused them, their own sensuous or intuitive character becomes less and less strongly marked. This fact has already been alluded to. Besides this, I find that, as time lapses, and forgetfulness creeps on, it becomes more and more difficult to trace back the line of memory which connects the image with its original entrance into the mind through sensation or internal feeling. And these two kinds of forgetfulness do not always work together with proportional force. Sometimes the image is very faint, while the original entrance of it into the mind is distinctly remembered: sometimes the image remains vivid, while we can scarcely if at all recal to mind how or when it first found its way in.

Concerning the gradual decay of the image itself, something more has to be said by and bye, as the manner in which this takes place may be found to throw some light on the question how the image is formed: at present, we have only to deal with the decay or destruction of the channel which connects the image with the original presentation.

Supposing that this channel has been entirely destroyed, so that I cannot by any labour and strain of memory call to mind when or where this or that image, the existence of which I am conscious of, first found an entry into my mind, how is it possible, it may be asked, to distinguish such an image from a mere internal presentation? First of all, it *is* an internal presentation; since, as has been said, every representation is a presentation and something more,—is a presentation which recalls some other former presentation. Here we have a presentation which does not in fact recal any former presentation. What right, then, have we to call this a representation? It fails of the distinctive quality of a representation. We say indeed that it once possessed that quality, but that this quality has dropped off from it through our forgetfulness: but what grounds can we have for assuming such to be the fact? If we have entirely forgotten that presentation which we say originated this image, how can we be sure that the image had its origin in presentation at all?

This difficulty may be stated in popular language under the form of the following question,—Are the materials used in imagination exclusively derived from sensation and (or) past internal experience: or do men possess a literally “creative” imagination?

This is not a question to be determined *a priori*. We cannot say that it is impossible for the mind to put forth imaginations, just as it puts forth feelings, as a species of new contribution to the stock of existences, not in any way borrowed from the external world. For, we know nothing whatever concerning the powers of the mind or self, beyond so much as we can gather from observation of its actual working.

But we have a right to bring in the “law of parsimony” as bearing upon the question. Under this law, we

must not predicate of the self a power to create images, if we find as a matter of fact that the images which it puts forth are such as might perfectly well have been simply imbibed through presentation. We find as fact that some images have been thus imbibed ; for we can trace the entire process in our memory. We find as fact, also, that our recollections are subject to decay, sometimes partial, sometimes total. Nothing is more natural than that the image itself should survive the decay, even the complete decay, of the channel which through the memory has connected it with presentation. As a matter of fact, it cannot be doubted that a large portion, at any rate, of the images which appear before our minds are in this manner the product of some former presentation, thus incompletely retained in remembrance. This being the case, there seems to be a strong presumption, either that the same thing holds good with regard to every one of our presentations, or else,—if it be not so, but some of them are produced by an entirely different process—that there would be found some distinctive difference between the two kinds. Supposing, therefore, that no such difference be found, it would seem to follow that our idea-images must all have one common origin,—viz., presentation whether sensuous or sensitive,—*i.e.*, external or internal.

Further, if the mind really possessed the power of creating images for itself, it would be reasonable to suppose that there would be a consciousness of this power. In fact, however, there is rather a consciousness of impotence in this respect. If I am asked to imagine some face I have never seen, or some taste or smell I have never tasted or smelt, I give myself very little trouble over an endeavour which I know beforehand to be fruitless. If you will tell me what face, among those I have seen, this unknown face is like, and in what respects the two differ, I may be ready

to attempt to frame a conception ; otherwise, I am wholly in the dark. This is the sort of answer any man would make to such a request ; and what is this, but a confession of utter incapacity to create images without materials given by nature ?

In reality, if a man carefully examines the results of his own work after he has been engaged in framing idea-images, he finds that, however fantastic and original may be the combination, there is nothing in the parts of which it consists but what he *might* have derived from presentation. No new fact or datum of sensation—no hitherto unexperienced feeling—ever distinctly reveals itself in imagining. If this be not the case, at any rate authenticated instances to the contrary are not forthcoming.

Representation, then, appears to be simply the reproduction,—with certain specific differences, which will be more fully considered in a future chapter,—of something which has been previously given in presentation. It is reproduction in an imitative manner : that is to say, the sensuous or sensitive character of the presentation is to some extent retained in this counterfeit of it.

This being so, it follows that each of those limitations, pointed out in the chapter on perception, which mark out the boundaries of a percept, and which in the same way bound internal presentations, are equally applicable to representations. That which is simply the imitative reproduction of something else can contain nothing which is not in its original. Hence, to constitute a pure representation, it is necessary that there be exhibited only the image of a single percept or internal presentation ; that it contain no matter of inference ; and that it be a whole in itself, *i.e.* something which can be apprehended without any act of sub-division.

We have now, in the three chapters on external and

internal presentation and representation, gone through that portion of our cognitions which may be called intuitive: we pass on to that more impalpable region which comprises the purely intelligential portion,—the “unpicturable notions of intelligence.”

CHAPTER VI.

NOTIONS.

To make up the whole of what we know, it is clear that there must be some other element or source of knowledge, besides intuitions.

My own consciousness, with all its contents, is, as has been said, an unquestionable reality for me. The fact of its existing, subjectively to myself, is one which it is not within my power even to doubt. If, then, I find that a certain portion of these contents or data are not accounted for by sensation, nor by internal presentation, nor by representation, I am bound to infer that there must be some other way of knowledge besides these three.

This other way of knowledge will, upon examination, I believe, be found to consist in this,—that the mind has the power, not only to work with the pictorial materials called representations, but also to evolve data, which may be called notions, generically different from representations, and such as can by no possibility be exhibited to the imagination.

This purely intelligential element of knowledge has not been wholly left out of sight by the metaphysical writers of this country. One portion of it—the working of a so-called faculty of comparison—has always been recognized. But the subject has been obscured, and its sphere unduly narrowed, by that which has been the besetting sin of metaphysics in all ages—an over-haste to theorize upon

insufficient data. Catalogues of the powers or faculties of the mind have been framed somewhat too hastily, and then the love of system has tempted their authors to prune down the phenomena of the human mind wherever they appeared to overspread the framework thus provided for them. "So much the worse for the facts," if they would not confirm themselves to their appointed theory. It should never be forgotten, however, that we are wholly unable to take a measure, *a priori*, of the powers of the mind: the mind itself being an unknown force, exhibited to us only in its effects; and these effects should be studied as men of science study the phenomena of nature. The data of consciousness should be for us what observed facts are in physics,—accepted realities which we are in no way to distort or suppress, and from the existence of which we are to induce our more general laws. What we term powers or faculties of the mind are for us nothing more than such general laws as we have ourselves gathered by induction from the phenomena. There can be no harm in our throwing together a number of such generalizations, and calling them "a list of the thinking faculties;" but then, should we afterwards light upon some act of thought, such as cannot be referred to any of these faculties, or to any combination of them, yet unquestionably exists, what we ought to conclude is, not that the act in question must be abnormal or illusory, but that our list of faculties must be incomplete. This rule, however, plain as it seems, has been very commonly neglected.

If we have these unpicturable notions, the fact of our having them must lie nearer to our knowledge than any theories we might frame concerning the mode in which the mind may have come to have them. We should begin, then, with considering how the case precisely stands with regard to this question of fact—whether we have them.

That which brings into one act of thought two or more percepts, or other intuitions, is, not an intuition, but a mental act generically different from an intuition.

For example, if I hold in my hand a billiard-ball, and feel that it is smooth and hard and heavy, and see that it is red, that which unites into one these several percepts, is, no one of the percepts themselves, neither the hardness nor the weight nor the red colour; nor yet is it any percept other than these; nor yet is it any representation of a percept; nor any internal presentation or representation; but it is a thought, notion, or belief, that all these percepts—the smoothness and hardness which I perceive through the touch, the weight which I perceive through resistance to my voluntary motion, and the redness which I perceive through the sight, are qualities,—in other words, belong to some substance or unperceived substratum. The only things which we perceive through the senses are the qualities: yet these perceptions invariably and as by a certain necessity give rise to this notion or belief in the existence of a something else which we do not perceive. And the nature of this something else—what it is that we even mean by it—appears in a singular manner to elude our imagination, so that we can by no possibility figure or present to ourselves the meaning of the belief which we yet cannot help entertaining. Here, then, we have an example of a notion wholly unpicturable.

Those metaphysicians who would reduce all thought to “transformed sensation,” pressed no doubt with the difficulty of thus dealing with our notion of substance, have laboured to explain away, if not utterly got rid of, the notion itself. Thus James Mill boldly denies that we have any such notions. “The qualities,” he says, “*are* the substance.” A billiard ball, on this theory, is nothing more than a certain definite combination of redness, hard-

ness, weight, and smoothness. John Stewart Mill is of opinion that what we call substance is merely a feeling produced in our minds by the constant association of certain "ideas," *i.e.*, the images of the so-called attributes. Mansel, from a very different point of view, endeavours in a manner of his own to combat the ordinarily received doctrine of substance and attribute. The arguments, by which these three distinguished writers support their respective views, must be considered in a future chapter.

In the meantime, assuming at any rate the subjective existence in our minds of a belief that colours, form, hardness, savour, and the like, are not isolated self-existent phenomena, floating somehow in the air, but are qualities of objects, we find that we have a belief in something which we cannot picture to our imagination.

The full purport of this fact will be further considered in the chapter on substance.

Another way in which we can bring two or perhaps more intuitions into one act of thought, is, by comparison.

Comparison is that act of mind by which we take cognizance of the likeness or unlikeness of two objects. It will be found upon examination that it is an act, the results of which are absolutely unpicturable to our imagination.

Our consciousness consists of two elements or species, which are distinguished from one another by a marked difference. It has a positive and a differential element. I am conscious, for example, of the colour red. This fact is a positive something in itself. Similarly, I am conscious of the colour blue. But, the moment I bring these two positive acts of consciousness into a species of mental juxtaposition,—that I connect them together in thought,—there is instantly evolved a third datum of consciousness, generically distinct from the other two, *viz.*, I am conscious of a difference between red and blue. It has been

attempted to reduce all consciousness to a knowledge of differences ; but such an attempt does violence to the plain dictates of experience. Everybody must feel that he knows what red is by itself—that he has a positive intuitive perception of this ; and that he also knows that red is different from blue : and that these facts are two distinct facts. The knowledge of the difference is not, indeed, intuitive ; for it cannot be reproduced by any act of imagination ; it does not, as it were, reside pictorially in the mind, so as to be called up and surveyed by itself. Since the knowledge of the difference between red and blue is a thing different from the knowledge of red, and from the knowledge of blue, then, if this difference can be imagined, it must be possible to imagine it apart from any image of either of the two colours. But a very simple experiment upon himself will satisfy any one that, to imagine the difference between red and blue, without first imagining the colours themselves, is simply impossible. It has been already shown, however, that it is the property of an intuition to constitute, or be capable of constituting, a whole by itself.¹

If, instead of two different colours, two colours which are perfectly alike are presented to us, whether at different times or severed in space, the juncture of the two in one act of thought evolves a datum which is generically like the knowledge of a difference, viz., a knowledge of similarity. On the logical principle that “the knowledge of opposites is one” we are bound to recognize that the discerning of difference and the discerning of similarity are acts identical as to their own nature, and differing only with reference to the material they are exerted on.

Comparison, then, is another mental act, generically differing from intuition, in that its results cannot be depicted by imagination.

¹ For the further development of this principle, see Part ii., chap. vi.

Negatives, again, are unimaginable. If we consider what that is which all acts of comparison have in common, we find it to be a notion or belief that, of the two objects compared, one has or is something which the other has or is not. When we note the difference between red and blue, we note also by implication that there is in or about red a something which does not exist with reference to blue. Again, when there is an intermission in the exercise of any sense, as when between sounds there comes a silence, or between sights a darkness, so that the attention remains for awhile unexercised, since this does not take place without our knowing it, there must, it seems, be some faculty by which we can acquire knowledge of a negative.

It would be idle to go about to prove that we can think a negative, and that when we have done so, we have not exhibited an impotency of the mind, but exerted a power. When we have learnt that a given object has not this or that property, we cannot but suppose that we have learnt something concerning the object,—we are so much nearer to a knowledge of it than we were before. Knowledge of the negative is by no means to be confounded with the negation of knowledge.

But when we endeavour to reproduce in an imaginative or quasi-pictorial fashion any mere negative, we find ourselves baffled. We cannot figure to ourselves darkness, except as a black colour, which is positive; nor silence, unless we bring in the aid of contrast, by first imagining sounds; nor shapelessness; nor anything indefinite, so far as it is indefinite. Intuition, whether external or internal, presentative or representative, is strictly limited to the positive and the concrete.

Now, if negatives can be thought but not imagined, it is clear that a very large portion of the process of reasoning must consist of a process which is unimaginable. With-

out negatives, the leading formulæ of logic, the law of contradiction and the law of excluded middle, could not exist. We could not say, "a thing cannot both be and not be,"—"a thing either is or is not," unless we could assert the still more comprehensive proposition—"every affirmative object of thought carries with it in thought a corresponding negative." The positive, its negative, and the relation between the two, together constitute—to use the expression of M. Cousin—the unit of thought, the *minimum cogitable*.

That we cannot imagine the negative, may indeed be rightly termed a mark of impotency to imagine, but by no means of impotency to think it; unless it be that the absence of the pictorial element shall have thrown any uncertainty or obscurity over our thinking. This, however, does not appear to be the case. Considered simply as objects of cognition or belief, there is no difference in degree of clearness, accuracy, or certain conviction, between an affirmative and its corresponding negative. Given *a*, as a datum thought, not-*a*, as an object of thought, is equally given: being given in and by the same act of thought: that which constitutes the boundary-line of *a*, constituting *ipso facto* the boundary-line of not-*a*. For example, the very same process of thought by which I learn what is honesty serves to teach me what is dishonesty; and it is impossible for me to be more or less perfect in the first lesson than in the second. Though the positive may in some cases be painted on the imagination, whilst the negative is in the dark, yet both are equally valid as acts of thought.

It would be easy to multiply illustrations of the truth that the sphere of thought is more extensive than that of intuition. We shall in a future chapter have to consider whether space and time can be adequately pictured in

imagination,—pictured, that is, so that the object imagined shall completely coincide in extent with the object thought. We think of space as that which the whole material universe occupies without filling: we can only imagine space, according to Hamilton, as a vast sphere of some grey or neutral colour. Is this image a full and adequate expression of this thought? A similar question arises with regard to time. Time and space have been termed the pure forms of intuition. In considering the pure forms of thought, we shall repeatedly have occasion to notice that we are dealing with matters that can be thought but not imagined.

All that is requisite, however, in this chapter, is to exhibit some few examples of unpicturable thought, so that we may be able to form a tolerably adequate notion of the distinction between this mode of mental activity and that of intuition. I will only, therefore, add one or two more illustrations; beginning with that which may be drawn from “general notions.”

If we have a notion corresponding to a general class-name, as man, dog, or the like, it is clear that this is a notion which cannot be represented intuitively, *i.e.* imagined. Imagination, as has been seen, is only of the singular, definite, and concrete: the object of visual imagination must have a given colour and size; and similarly the imagination which answers to each sense can only deal with objects which exhibit single, concrete, imitations of its own proper acts of sensation. But a dog, which may be either black or brown, smooth or shaggy, of any size, and in many ways with contradictory attributes,—and such is the class dog here spoken of,—cannot be adequately imagined, for it is wanting in all the requisites of an image.

Similarly, individual actions cannot be imagined. If we

consider how much is contained in the notion expressed by these words, "John is running," we shall find in it ingredients which, as contradictory, cannot possibly be exhibited in a single act of imagination. Before I can see that John is running, I must have seen John in at least two places, *i.e.* have had two visual images of John, in some respects different from one another, and I must also have connected these two images in one act of thought, under the law of substance, as both belonging to the same object. Every action which involves motion or change, in like manner involves at least two images, and likewise a certain notion of a connexion between the two. But, if I can imagine only the concrete and singular, it is plain that I cannot grasp these three elements in a single act of imagination. But I can think of motion, or of change, or of action in general, by a single act of thought. This act therefore must be something differing in kind from an act of imagination.

We may go a step further. It will be found upon examination that not only individual actions, but individual objects, if thought of by a single act of mind, are thought of in a manner which cannot be represented to the imagination. Take, for example, the chair I see before me at this moment. I think of it as having one uniform colour, and four legs of equal length. But I do not see it so: I see a play of light and shade over the surface, *i.e.* several different colours, and I see legs of unequal length. And this is so, let me shift my position as I may. I can imagine my chair such as I see it, but I cannot possibly imagine it such as I think it. No effort of imagination can make those legs look equal. Again, I have seen, in the process of shifting my position for the purpose, and I can remember, some half dozen visual images, no one of which was precisely like the other: I believe or think,

however, that all those images belonged to one and the same object—that individual chair. But this part of my notion I can by no effort of mind image forth to myself. If I try to form one image which shall adequately represent all that I think concerning my chair, I find it impracticable.

This difficulty concerning an individual object is precisely the same in kind as that which has just been pointed out concerning general notions. As I cannot imagine the class “dog,” because my notion of the class includes contradictory attributes, so I cannot imagine the individual chair,—cannot, that is, adequately image it, so that the image shall be coextensive with the notion,—because my notion of it contains within itself contradictory attributes. By “contradictory attributes,” is here in both these cases to be understood, attributes which are either too many or too few to be exhibited conjointly in one and the same image. For example, my notion of a dog may be regarded either as embracing every possible canine colour, and then the colours are incompatible with unity of image, or as eliminating colour entirely, as not an essential part of it, and then there can be no visual image for want of colour. So, my notion of my chair may be regarded either as embracing all the six variations of relative size in the legs which were contained in my six observations,—in which case it is impossible to combine all six into one image; or it may exclude the comparative length of legs as no essential parts of the image, and then there is wanting some necessary ingredient of an image.

General notions, then, notions of individual actions, and notions of individual objects, cannot be adequately pictured in imagination. Either, consequently, there are no such things as these notions, or there must be some mode of mental apprehension different from imagining.

Let us consider whether the difficulty here stated is got rid of by the theory of nominalism.

The argument of the Nominalists may be stated as follows :—

How can the mind—it is asked—frame and use general notions? Here are two questions, which should be kept distinct: how are such notions first put together, and, when they have once been formed, what takes place when such a notion is upon occasion called up again for use?

A general notion is first formed, say the Nominalists, by taking some particular image and using it as a sort of type: comparing with it a number of other images, and attaching to it in thought those which in the main resemble, severing off those which in the main are dissimilar to, this standard or pattern specimen. In the objects which are thus attached together as resembling one another, there exist indeed differences, but these are recognized by the mind as being unimportant, in comparison with the similarities.

It is here to be noted that, when for this purpose we speak of differences as being unimportant, this is always to be understood, with reference to the object which the classifier, or the classifying mind, is supposed to have in view. There are various modes of classifying,—*e.g.*, the popular, which distributes objects according to their broad and obvious similarities, and the scientific, which perhaps, as in the Linnæan system of botanic classification, selects for its test of resemblance some one feature alone. But herein all the modes are alike, that objects are classified by confining one's attention to the question of similarity or dissimilarity with reference to some qualities which for the purpose are considered as important, and disregarding others which for the purpose are considered as unimportant.

By multiplied acts of comparison, thus made, between image and image, it comes to pass—still it is the Nominalist who speaks—that there are thrown together great heaps of images which are considered as being alike. These are as it were ticketted and labelled by the mind, being stamped with one common name. The name is the symbol of their bond of union. From thenceforth, if ever these images are thought of with reference to their oneness in the system of classification, it is the name, and that only, which is thought of. Class-names thus constitute a species of mental shorthand, or algebraic notation.

The doctrine of the Nominalists has been stated with extreme perspicuity and much fulness by Dugald Stewart (*Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Book i. chap. iv. § 2); and, with the modifications and cautions which Stewart has provided, or which may be gathered from some of the concessions which he makes in answering Reid, it seems difficult absolutely to dissent from his doctrine.

“It is evident,” says Stewart, “that, with respect to individuals of the same genus, there are two classes of truths; the one, particular truths relating to each individual apart, and deduced from a consideration of its peculiar and distinguishing properties; the other, general truths deduced from a consideration of their common qualities, and equally applicable to all of them. Such truths may be conveniently expressed by means of general terms, so as to form propositions, comprehending under them as many particular truths as there are individuals comprehended under the general terms. It is further evident, that there are two ways in which such general truths may be obtained; either by fixing the attention on one individual, in such a manner that our reasoning may involve no circumstances but those which are common to

the whole genus, or (laying aside entirely the consideration of things) by means of the general terms with which language supplies us. In either of these cases, our investigations must necessarily lead us to general conclusions. In the first case, our attention being limited to those circumstances in which the subject of our reasoning resembles all other individuals of the same genus, whatever we demonstrate with respect to this subject must be true of every other to which the same attributes belong. In the second case, the subject of our reasoning being expressed by a generic word, which applies in common to a number of individuals, the conclusion we form must be as extensive in its application, as the name of the subject is in its meaning. The former process is analogous to the practice of geometers, who, in their most general reasonings, direct the attention to a particular diagram; the latter to that of algebraists, who carry on their investigations by means of symbols" (Stewart's Works, Ed. Hamilton, vol. ii., pp. 173, 174).

According to Stewart, then, we first generalize,—throwing our particular observations into classes by taking note of their resemblances; and, having done so, we then use our generalizations upon occasion in one or other of two ways,—either by singling out some individual and using it as the type of its class, or else by using a name which serves as a symbol of or substitute for the notion of the class.

Sir W. Hamilton, a Nominalist as Stewart is, expresses himself, with greater vigour of style, but in substance almost identically to the same effect.

"We cannot represent to ourselves," he says, "the class *man* by any equivalent notion or idea. All that we can do is to call up some individual image, and consider it as representing, though inadequately representing, the

generality. This we can easily do ; for as we can call into imagination any individual, so we can make that individual image stand for any or for every other which it resembles, in those essential points which constitute the identity of the class" (Ib. p. 297).

"We compare objects ; we find them similar in certain respects, that is, in certain respects they affect us in the same manner ; we consider the qualities in them, which thus affect us in the same manner, as the same ; and to this common quality we give a name ; and as we can predicate this name of all and each of the resembling objects, it constitutes them into a class" (Ib. p. 313).

To the doctrine of the Nominalists, Dr. Reid had objected that universals, though they cannot be imagined, can be distinctly conceived (thought). "When Mr. Pope says 'The proper study of mankind is man,' I conceive his meaning distinctly, although I neither imagine a black or a white, a crooked or a straight man." To which Stewart replies that "When we speak of conceiving or understanding a general proposition, we mean nothing more than that we have a conviction (founded on our previous use of the words in which it is expressed), that we have it in our power, at pleasure, to substitute, instead of the general terms, some one of the individuals comprehended under them" (Elem., chap. iv., § 3, Works ii. 192). The whole controversy between Nominalism and Conceptualism appears to be summed up in these two sentences.

Into this controversy it is not at present necessary to enter. It will be sufficient if it can be shown that the theory of the Nominalists (for on that of the Conceptualists no question arises) obliges those who hold it to acknowledge the existence of a mode of mental activity purely intelligential,—that is to say, generically different from, and incapable of being exhibited as, intuition whether pre-

sentative or representative:—in other words, that we can think that which we cannot imagine.

In the first place, then, the formation of classes, and with it that of class-names, is allowed by the Nominalists to be the result of a series of comparisons made between different objects, so as to note their similarities and differences. But a comparison involves the bringing together into one act of thought of two distinct intuitions; an act which, as has been seen, is not itself an act of intuition. It involves the noting of likeness and of difference; but this noting, as has also been seen, is non-intuitive. Further, it involves a selection from among the similarities or differences, so as to ascertain which of them may, with reference to the purpose in hand, be disregarded as being unimportant. This requires that each similarity or difference shall be considered with relation to the purpose in hand: and this is itself a fresh process of comparison, and one of a very abstract kind. For, the purpose in hand, viz., classification, being one and the same, at all events when it is a question of the classification of two given objects relatively to each other, while the several similarities or differences which are to be thus considered are many and diverse, it is clear that the comparison between the purpose and the similarities or differences cannot be very close: on the principle, already pointed out, that, in comparison, extension and intension are always in an inverse ratio to one another. The one thing which has something in common with many diverse things can at all events have nothing in common with those qualities in which the things differ from one another: consequently, the more those differences are multiplied, the less community can there be between the objects and their common standard of comparison. In truth, the relation between the purpose of a classification and the qualities of the

things classified appears to be one of those relations which, according to Hamilton, cannot be pictured to the imagination.

Thus in the first stage of the process—the forming of classes—something non-intuitive is brought in. Nor is this less the case when, having formed our classes, and labelled them with class-names, we come to examine whether this or that individual object falls within this or that class. To take one of the simplest cases:—I see a horse, and wish to determine whether or no it belongs to the class quadruped. A quadruped, I know, is an animal that has four feet. I can see four hoofs: the form of the hoof, and such sensible qualities as I can apprehend by touch or otherwise, are intuitions. The counting four is not intuition, for it requires a bringing together into one act of thought of several intuitions. And it is not intuition which informs me whether a hoof is a foot. That property in virtue of the possession of which this or that thing is constituted a foot, must be something which is common to the human foot, to the lion's paw, to the claws of a bird, and many other very dissimilar objects. This common property, therefore, must be first extracted, as it were, from all these objects, and the extract thus obtained must be compared with the horse's hoof. This process of extraction and subsequent comparison must be the same in kind, when the result admits of no doubt, *e.g.* in the case of a horse's hoof, as in those difficult cases which have divided the opinions of men of science, *e.g.* whether a monkey's fore-paw is a foot or no. In both steps of the process there is something non-intuitive. In extracting the common property of many objects of intuition, there is needed a series of acts of comparison,—at every stage of which there must be a bringing together of two (or more) several intuitions into a single act of thought. The same thing

takes place in comparing the common property with the individual object whose right to a place in the class is under question. But it has been already shown that when two intuitions, whether of two different senses or modes, or of the same sense and mode acting consecutively, are thus brought into one act or unit of thought, that which brings them into one cannot itself be an intuition. This extracting of the common property of a class has here been spoken of as something distinct from the original forming of the class: it would perhaps be more accurate to say that it is by the discerning of the common property, and the adopting of it as the standard of classification, that a class first comes to be formed. But, however this may be, the argument which has here been put forward remains equally valid.

Nominalism, then, it appears, does not enable us to dispense with the non-intuitive element of consciousness. Nominalists or no, we must still hold that we can think that which we cannot represent to ourselves in imagination. This truth is most explicitly acknowledged by Sir William Hamilton, however little it may cohere with his celebrated theory of "the Unconditioned."

"A relation," says Hamilton, "cannot be represented in imagination. The two terms, the two relative objects, can be severally imaged in the sensible phantasy, but not the relation itself. This is the object of the Comparative Faculty, or of Intelligence Proper. To objects so different as the images of sense and the unpicturable notions of intelligence, different names ought to be given: and accordingly this has been done wherever a philosophical nomenclature of the slightest pretensions to perfection has been formed. In the German language, which is now the richest in metaphysical expressions of any living tongue, the two kinds of objects are carefully distinguished. In our lan-

guage, on the contrary, the terms *idea*, *conception*, *notion*, are used almost as convertible for either; and the vagueness and confusion which is thus produced, even within the narrow sphere of speculation to which the want of the distinction also confines us, can be best appreciated by those who are conversant with the philosophy of the different countries" (Lectures, Met. vol. ii. p. 312, 313).

It appears, then, that, besides intuition, external or internal, presentative or representative, there is some other kind of mental action which co-operates with intuition in furnishing matter of consciousness. This faculty or mode of activity has up to this point been described by negatives only. We can form no guess as to its nature from considering *à priori* the nature of the mind or self which puts forth this power; since the nature of the mind is inscrutable to us, save only so far as it reveals itself to us in processes of action,—sensation, feeling, imagination, and thought, being supposed to be modes of activity on the part of a force or being which, except in these modes, is absolutely impalpable. Considered *à posteriori*, we have as yet only learnt concerning thought that it is non-intuitive,—that herein is its distinctive difference from the representative faculty or imagination.

Whether we are to regard human knowledge after the analogy of a piece of mosaic work, of which intuitions are the coloured stones, and notions the cement which holds them in their places; or whether we should be nearer the truth in describing our notions, more particularly our notions of objects, as receptacles or pigeon holes into which our intuitions are stowed away as they come, each under its proper head; is a question, not perhaps entirely of pure curiosity, which must for the present be left undetermined. Some light may perhaps be thrown upon it in the course of the following chapters.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

DIVISION OF THE SUBJECT.

IN the Introduction to this book it was shown that the fabric of human knowledge, opinion, and conviction, such as it actually exists, can only be accounted for by the supposition that there are in the human mind, latent, until aroused by some stimulus from without, certain beliefs which the mind is in a manner compelled by the very constitution of its nature to entertain. It was seen that, if the existence of such primary beliefs were denied, a scepticism so thorough-going as to appear to our own sober selves, in unmetaphysical hours, merely ludicrous, must be the only legitimate conclusion. We saw, further, that precisely the same *reductio ad absurdum* followed the attempt at once to acknowledge the existence, and by a supposition of illusoriness to deny the objective validity, of such beliefs. Having thus established that primary beliefs exist, and that they must be accepted by us as sufficient evidence that the things believed are true, I proceeded to point out the criteria by which these primary beliefs are to be distinguished from other beliefs or opinions, which, as being derivative and contingent, may be liable to error.

In the First Part—laying aside, for the time, the whole

subject of primary beliefs—we were occupied with the task of marking out the main divisions of the human consciousness. It was necessary to dwell at some length on this, in order perfectly to emancipate ourselves from the opinion so firmly rooted in modern metaphysics, that all mental action is only transformed sensation or reflection. Even Hamilton and Mansel, it appears, have not completely shaken off the trammels of this doctrine. The opinion, that “impressions and ideas,” in other words presentations and their imitative representations, constitute the entire stock of our mental possessions, has been impressed upon us by so many writers, from Locke downwards, with so great a variety of illustration, as at length to have rivetted itself upon the imagination of philosophers, till it has become as difficult to shake off as our childish terrors about goblins and spectres. That there likewise exists a third mode of apprehension, purely intelligential, having no hold either on the senses or the imagination, is a doctrine which has still, perhaps, to fight its way to recognition. It was necessary, therefore, at the risk of being tedious, to make this threefold subdivision as clear as possible.

It now remains for us, in this Second Part, to bring the two topics, which have been treated separately in the Introduction and in the First Part, into combination one with another. We are to study in detail the influence of primary beliefs, as affecting each of the main divisions of the human consciousness.

The method in which this is to be done must be uniform throughout. It will be necessary first to enquire what is in fact the established general belief of mankind upon each of the subjects in question. The next step will be to ascertain what contribution towards such a belief has, or can have, been made by the senses or the internal sense.

The residuum must be attributed either to representation or to thought. Now representation, as has been seen, being the mere imitative counterpart of presentation, can of itself furnish no original matter of knowledge. Our residuum, therefore, must be traceable to some act of pure thought. Of such acts, those which are derivative must at last be traced back to some that are simple and primary. Thus we shall finally be led to primary acts of thought; and these, so far as they connect themselves with our knowledge, are primary beliefs.

By this process, systematically worked out, we may expect at length to obtain a catalogue of the primary beliefs of the human mind. When this task shall have been accomplished, there will still remain that of collating these beliefs one with another, and so coming to the final question of the critical philosophy, viz.—Are our primary beliefs, considered as a body, self-consistent? upon the answer to which question it depends whether a sceptical or a positive philosophy be the true one.

It can hardly be necessary here to point out that the “established general beliefs of mankind” above spoken of must be such as will bear the tests pointed out in the third chapter of the Introduction, and more especially those of universality and necessity. Nothing can be a belief of man as man, unless it be believed by all men: not indeed necessarily in the form of an articulate proposition, nor necessarily at every age of a man’s life or at every stage in the intellectual and moral development of a community. All knowledge and all belief is at first latent in each and all men; the capacity or aptitude for believing after this or that pre-ordained form is brought forth into the light of consciousness by and with the occasion for its exercise; which occasion may and often does come late in the life of a man or the history of a community. Until the belief

has been evolved, that man or that community offers a seeming but illusory disproof of its universality. The universality which we are to seek is not, then, an empirical one. We are not simply to enquire how stands the matter of fact; do we find that all men at all times believe thus or thus? but we must place the man fairly before the problem; we must bring him to the point of view at which he is compelled to interrogate his consciousness as to whether he instinctively believes thus or thus, or the contrary, or whether he is unconscious of any propensity to give a preference to either of the two conflicting opinions. The process, in short, by which we are to determine whether a belief is universal, is one not of bare observation but of experiment. This process of experiment is one which, to a certain extent, requires the conjoint working of teacher and pupil—of writer and reader; the former must interrogate himself, and declare the result; the latter also must interrogate himself, and judge how far the result he experiences corresponds with that which has been announced to him. It is this necessity for a conjoint activity on the part of the reader, which principally makes the study of metaphysics difficult, and at once irksome to the many, and fascinating to the few who have an affinity for this peculiar kind of intellectual labour.

Thus much concerning universality. Necessity, as applied to a belief, is distinguished from universality by this—that its contrary is inconceivable. We shall have to consider, in a future chapter, whether the distinction between necessity and mere contingent universality, as applied to our cognitions, does or does not correspond with the distinction expressed in popular language, when we say that we *know* some things and *believe* others. At present, therefore, I will say no more on this head, but

will proceed at once to the distribution of the subject of this Second Part.

It will be convenient, I think, to begin this part with an attempt to define, as accurately as may be, what is the meaning of this term Belief; thus to show what are the characteristic marks by which it is distinguished from other mental phenomena. We shall then be ready with more confidence to go forward in the task before us, viz., to examine some of the more important beliefs connected, first, with sensation, then with internal presentation, afterwards with the several kinds of representations, whether of memory or of the imagination, and finally with pure reason.

Beginning with presentations, then, we shall in the first place examine the questions connected with that belief, by which we distribute our presentations under the twofold subdivision of self and not-self. The problem is here presented to us, to discover by what means it comes to pass that, whereas the sole objects of which we are conscious are individual, isolated, phenomena, we yet universally believe in the existence, and in the actual contact, of two spheres or modes of being, to which we give the names, respectively, of mind or self, and matter or not-self. Under this head we shall have to examine Sir William Hamilton's doctrine of Natural Realism, and contrast it with the representative theories of modern metaphysicians, his predecessors.

In dealing with this question, it will be found impossible to keep outward presentation, or perception, entirely apart from internal presentation. The question is two-fold, but apparently must be examined in one both as regards the self and the not-self. Our belief that the self is one—which implies that it is something numerically different from the acts of the self, from that aggregate of thoughts

and feelings which make up the sum of what we are conscious of,—can be shown to be one and the same belief by which we hold that the not-self or external universe has an existence distinct from, and independent of, our perceptions. This belief, and the law or truth corresponding to it, is the belief or law of substance.

It appears inevitable that we should in the next place treat of Space and Time. These, according to Kant, are the æsthetic forms of external and internal presentation respectively : according to Hume and Brown, and even, as will appear in its proper place, according to Hamilton and Mansel, are merely finite and phenomenal percepts or internal presentations, obtained by a process of mental abstraction. This controversy, and its solution by an appeal to primary beliefs, though it may lead us over ground somewhat trite, is of too much importance to be omitted.

The next topic to be considered will be that of the forms of pure thought. According to what primary laws, we shall have to ask, does that conjunction of intuitions proceed, by which we pass from the quasi-sensuous realm of memory and fancy to the *lumen siccum* of pure reason ; and what primary beliefs, if any, are involved in the working of those laws ? These questions will naturally lead us to an examination of Kant's categories of pure reason. And at this point it will be necessary to take some notice of Hamilton's celebrated Philosophy of the Unconditioned.

Of these forms of thought, there is one which, for its importance, deserves to be isolated from the others, and treated at greater length separately. This is, the law or primary belief of causation. An examination of some of the questions connected with this subject will form the concluding chapter of the present part.

It will be remarked that, although the subdivision here

made does not precisely tally with that of the main branches of consciousness; which would hardly be practicable, since the topics to be discussed run into one another in such a manner that, if we were to attempt an artificial separation—*e.g.*, of the law of substance in relation to perception, and the law of substance in relation to internal presentation,—we should dislocate our topics, and destroy that unity of view which is requisite for comprehension;¹ yet that there is a gradual transition, from topic to topic, along the line of thought which was followed out in the second part, viz., from perception, *viâ* representation, to pure reason.

¹ “Hoc non est dividere, sed frangere rem.” (Cic.)

CHAPTER II.

OF BELIEF.—WHAT IT IS.

WHEN men say that they doubt, or believe, or know, this or that, they are in this mental act bringing together two distinct objects of thought, and affirming a certain correspondency, perfect or imperfect, between the two.

When I doubt the testimony of an eye-witness as to a certain event, the two objects thus brought together are, the statement of facts which I hear, and the facts which I suppose to have actually occurred out of my presence. When I believe that what I remember as having taken place yesterday did take place yesterday, the two objects are, respectively, the remembrance presented, and the occurrence of yesterday which is in this manner represented. When I say I know that what I at this moment see does actually at this moment exist as a phenomenon, the two objects are, the phenomenon considered simply in itself, and the phenomenon viewed with relation to the possibility of illusion.

In each of these cases, the act of bringing together the two objects, and contemplating them as having a certain unity when taken in one view, is an act purely intellectual ; and, so far as this act is concerned, it would seem that the relation of one to the other of the two objects respectively combined is one and the same in each of the three cases. But, from another point of view, there is this

difference between them; each of the three combinations of two objects appears to engender in the mind a feeling, or internal presentation, different in kind from that engendered by either of the others. In the first case we have the presentation called doubting, in the second that called believing, and in the third that called knowing.

These appear to be simple feelings, not susceptible of definition, because not traceable to anything more rudimentary; just as it is impossible to define a simple perception, as the colour red or blue.

It often happens that we know whether we believe or doubt a particular fact, without at the moment knowing why we do so. A man makes an assertion: perhaps he affirms some fact which is new to us; we believe it, or we doubt it, and we know perfectly well which we do; while, if we attempted to give a reason, even to ourselves, either for the belief or the doubt, we should perhaps be a good deal puzzled. In such a case as this, we have the belief or doubt present to the consciousness, but the causes of that belief or doubt absent, at the moment, from it. There must, then, be some difference between these two feelings,—viewed in themselves, apart from any consideration of the causes which may have engendered them,—by which we are enabled, on experiencing one of them, to distinguish it from the other. But this difference, like that between the colours red and blue, is too primitive for definition; being the difference between two simple feelings.¹

Each of these, as of all other, acts of judgment, being the mental bringing together of two objects of thought, requires as a condition that the object concerning which

¹ The term feeling is here, as throughout, used as synonymous with "internal presentation;" feeling is to the self that which perception is to the not-self.

we say that we know, or believe, or doubt, its truth, shall at least have been apprehended by the mind, so that we know what it is. Obvious as this appears, it seems to have by some accident escaped the acuteness of Sir William Hamilton, when he pronounces "the infinite" to be incognizable, and yet affirms that we are so framed as necessarily to believe in its existence.¹ The judgment "A. exists," appears to involve an act of thinking or apprehending A., plus something more.

It may perhaps be thought that the difference between the three feelings, doubting, believing, and knowing, consists merely in the different correspondency, or closeness of union, between the two objects of thought brought into conjunction in each of the three acts of judgment respectively. If the correspondency is perfect, so that there is no one instance to the contrary, and never will or can be one, then, it may be thought, we have knowledge, *i.e.*, an opinion, or conclusion of the intellect, that there never can be a contrariety between the object as thought and the object as existing. And so of the other two: in each case a conclusion of the pure intellect has been formed, and has been made permanent by annexing to it a distinctive name; after which the connexion of ideas suffices to recal the intellectual conclusion, upon the mere hearing or thinking of the name. On this view, these three judgments are in no sense feelings—*i.e.*, internal presentations,—but simply compendious expressions of a completed intelligential process.

But it must be answered:—This may be the right way of accounting for the formation within the mind of this

¹ "The unconditioned is incognizable and inconceivable" (Discuss. p. 12). "By a wonderful revelation, we are, in the very consciousness of our inability to conceive aught above the relative and finite, inspired with a *belief* in the existence of something unconditioned beyond the sphere of all reprehensible reality" (*ib.* p. 15).

or that kind of judgment with reference to this or that individual object-matter. It may be that the reason why we have come to doubt the testimony of witnesses is that we have known instances of their mendacity; why we believe in the general fidelity of our own memory is that we have had its reports very frequently confirmed from other sources, and by their own permanency; why we know that phenomena really exist as phenomena is that we have never had an instance to the contrary. But the question is, not how have I come by such or such a feeling or conclusion of the intellect; but, *is* belief a feeling or no? This question may most readily be answered—if the consciousness, directly appealed to, gives a response which is not clear enough—by enquiring whether, in the order of time, the intellectual conclusion, or the name, or something else, comes first. If it be the fact that there is a something else, which proclaims the result before consciously working out the intellectual process of inference to a conclusion, and annexes the name after, or in the act of, proclaiming the result, then at any rate the act of judgment contains or involves something else besides a process of the intellect and the coining of a name: there must likewise be a feeling, or internal presentation, by which we are directly conscious of a mood answering to the thought. And this, as has been said, appears to be the case. A man tells me a piece of news. Instantly upon the hearing of it, without knowing why, I believe, or I disbelieve, or I doubt: and this with no word uttered by me; so that, whatever has engendered that state of mind in me, no association of ideas founded on language can account for it: nor can the thing of which I am conscious be merely the intellectual process above spoken of, since of that process I am not conscious at all—I cannot even by an effort bring to the surface of my mind the causes of my

belief or disbelief: that of which I am conscious must therefore be a mood, state of mind, or feeling.

Considered simply in themselves, as feelings, it is obvious that the contrary to belief is, not disbelief, but doubt. For, disbelief in A. is belief in not-A. : it is the same state of mind, but with reference to a different object. Doubt and belief may indeed coexist in the same mind with reference to the same object; but they coexist as conflicting and mutually destructive forces. Doubt may be the equipoise of two opposing beliefs. Perfect belief is that which has no mixture of doubting: perfect doubt, that which has no inclination or bias towards one rather than the other of the beliefs which are its contraries and the contradictories of one another.

Belief, then, is the contrary of doubt. What, in the next place, is the relation of belief to knowledge?

It is, perhaps, less correct to say that believing is one thing and knowing another, than that knowing is one kind of believing. Pure and perfect belief—*i.e.*, belief unmixed with doubt,—is knowledge. We know, if we know anything, that which our senses at the moment inform us. Very well: but a closer analysis shows us that, of what we think we are at this moment seeing, a large portion is contributed by the mind itself, as the result of training and the association of ideas,—*e.g.*, relative sizes of distant and nearer objects, foreshortening, and even single and upright vision. Shall we, then, so soon as we have learnt this lesson, subtract from the thing we know this portion of it, and hold that this is only matter of belief, while what we know is simply that which is really upon the retina of the eye—or that picture which is presented to the mind from without itself? Apparently we must do this; since the former portion is dependent on the fidelity of our mental faculties, which is only a matter of belief

with us. But the study of metaphysics will not permit the disintégration of knowledge to stop at this point. You think it is *you* who are receiving in your mind a picture or impression of something external to yourself: and this you suppose to be a part of that which you at this moment *know*. From this supposed knowledge you must please to subtract two things,—that it is you who are receiving it, and that there is a something external to yourself from whence the impression proceeds. These two are beliefs contributed by the mind: they are inexplicable and there is no verifying them. If knowledge be something other than belief, these, being beliefs only, must not be brought into your list of things known. There remains, then, this residuum: that phenomenon of perception which seems at this moment to be before me does in reality seem at this moment to be before me. This, however, is an identical proposition. If the formula, “What is, is,” contains any matter of thought whatever, it may be questioned whether even this formula is not rather a matter of belief than of knowledge: for the form of it is contributed by the mind itself, but the objective validity of our mental powers cannot be verified, but must be taken on trust.

Thus, going step by step, we seem to find that what we take to be our knowledge resolves itself into belief.

Can we, perhaps, make the following distinction:—Those judgments as to which error is simply inconceivable, represent what we know: those as to which error is conceivable, but is not in fact supposed to exist, represent our beliefs?

All objects which we regard as existing, are regarded by us either as necessary or contingent; and, of the contingent, each is either constant or varying. A thing either must happen, always happens, or sometimes does not happen. That is necessary, the contradictory of which is inconceivable. That is universal-contingent, the contra-

dictory of which can be conceived, but is believed to have no existence. That is contingent simply, the contradictory of which both can be conceived, and is believed sometimes to exist.

Of simply-contingent or universal-contingent objects of judgment, we can have no higher cognition than belief; for, a belief either in the non-existence or in the occasional existence of their respective contradictories forms one necessary ingredient of this knowledge: and, as a convoy of ships can sail no faster than the slowest sailer amongst them, so our knowledge can reach no greater height than the measure of its weakest constituent element. If, to make up the sum of what I mean when I say "A. exists," it is necessary that I should hold the non-existence of A. to be a thing which never has been or will be, and if I am unable to hold this except as a belief, my assertion that A. exists must likewise stand as no more than a belief. Perhaps, however, the case may be otherwise with those judgments which have the character of necessity.

If there be such a state of mind as knowing, and if it be a state of more perfect certainty than that of merely believing, then, as it would seem that no judgments can be more certain than necessary judgments, necessary judgments must be not simply believed but known.

Such is the reasoning by which it may be argued that knowledge, as a something higher and other than belief, exists. Those who would reason thus may very likely feel disposed to assail the chain of argument which was presented immediately before theirs, in order to establish that knowledge is only a kind of belief, in the following manner:—

We think—that is, the unscientific think—that they not merely believe, but know, that which their senses at the moment exhibit to them. They are right in thinking so.

They err only in supposing that their senses exhibit *all* which they think they see or otherwise perceive: this is a complex, of which a certain portion is contributed by the natural faculties of the perceiving mind, the objective validity of which faculties, it must be conceded, is matter of belief merely. We concede, then, that this portion must be subtracted from the thing known. What remains is that which has been called, in the paragraph we are now criticising, an “identical proposition;” viz., “that phenomenon of perception which at this moment seems to be before me does in reality seem to be at this moment before me.” This is a necessary proposition: its contradictory is inconceivable: and, whether it contains much or little, it contains something; it is a synthetic, not an analytic judgment—ampliative, not simply explicative. This is true of that more general judgment of which this is an example,—“What is, is.” It is this judgment by which we are able to affirm, as was affirmed in Chapter I. of the First Part, that “there is about consciousness a sort of certainty peculiar to itself: I may doubt whether there be objects external to myself, but it is not possible for me to doubt that the appearance as of such objects is really presented in my consciousness.” This affirmation of a reality, though only a subjective reality, in the objects of consciousness, is not an unmeaning formula of words, but is the connecting together of two distinct objects of thought—the phenomenon, and its reality. We have, then, from perception, a residuum, which is matter of absolute knowledge, not simply of belief,—viz., the subjective reality of that which we at the moment perceive purely by the senses.

I have thus endeavoured fairly to state what I suppose to be the reasoning, and the objections to my reasons to the contrary, of those who hold that knowledge is not a

kind of belief, but something generically distinct from it. The reasoning appears to me, however, to be unsatisfactory.

How are we to get over the difficulty already propounded? If the judgment, "What is, is," be a synthetic judgment, it is a judgment the validity of which must depend on the validity of the process of synthesis. This process is a mental process. Who is to guarantee for us the objective validity of any of our mental processes? We can and do believe in this validity : but we can never verify it in any way : illusoriness is conceivable of it, though the manner of the illusion may in this or that instance be inconceivable : but, that which, for aught we know, may be illusory, and which we have no means of verifying, may be believed, but cannot be said to be known,—if knowledge is a something different in kind from belief.

On the whole, then, we seem driven back to the conclusion that knowing and believing are not in reality two different states of mind, but that knowing is a kind of believing. It remains for us to consider—what kind?

According to the ordinary use of these terms in popular language, it would be perfectly accurate to say, I believe this and you believe the contrary ; I believe this now and I believed the contrary a year ago ; but equally inaccurate to say, I know this and you know the contrary, or, I know this now and I knew the contrary a year ago. From this it may be seen that knowledge is taken to be something which is permanent and universal, while belief may change from time to time and be different in different minds. Knowledge, then, may probably be defined as the permanent beliefs of man as man.

No belief can be relied upon as permanent, even in one man, except such a belief as has been formed after the

fullest investigation and study of the question which the man is capable of: for, any other belief must be liable to be subverted upon a fuller inquiry. No belief can be relied on as being the permanent belief of man as man, except such as has been formed after the fullest investigation of which the human mind is capable. Knowledge, then, is belief founded upon an exhaustive study of the object-matter.

That this study eventually leads us to, and rests upon, certain inexplicable beliefs concerning our own mental constitution and powers, does not in the least militate against its results being that which we call knowledge.

For example; a chemist knows that water is composed of oxygen and hydrogen; for he has himself conducted the requisite experiments, and has so carefully verified the result as to be satisfied there can be no mistake. He is persuaded that, in our existing state of knowledge, the human mind can arrive at no other conclusion. But, if our chemist happens also to be a metaphysician—a circumstance which ought not to diminish his aptitude for obtaining knowledge as to the fact in chemistry,—he will know that the soundness of his conclusions on this point must depend on the objective validity of his perceptions, memory, and power of reasoning; all which, so far as his assurance of them is concerned, rest on no steadier a basis than a belief within his own mind. His knowledge, therefore, is but a belief; but, because it is such a belief that belongs to man as man, and is one of the permanent elements in his nature, the chemist nevertheless has a right to say, I *know* that the fact concerning water is so and so.

We, who take the fact at secondhand, on the authority of chemists or chemical books, have not the same right as our chemist, to say that we know the fact is so; because

we have not ourselves pushed the investigation as far as we have it in our power to do. We, therefore, can only say that we believe it.

On this view of the case, a primary belief, so long as it operates on the mind unconsciously, and before we have verified its nature, does not give us real knowledge ; but, so soon as we have once traced out and verified its rank as a primary belief, or constituent of mind as mind, then the things which this belief assures us of must be regarded as being *known*.

CHAPTER III.

THE DOCTRINE OF "NATURAL REALISM."

It has for many years been a generally received opinion amongst metaphysicians, that mind and matter never do, and indeed cannot by possibility, come into direct contact or intercommunication one with another. It cannot be denied, however, that the vast majority of mankind believe that they can and do. The question is, whether the philosophers, or the multitude, are in the right.

The former would argue their case to the following effect:—That the popular opinion is erroneous altogether, seems not unlikely from the fact that at any rate a large portion of it, and this the portion which lies nearest to the surface, is demonstrably erroneous. It is certain that men ordinarily believe that they see objects themselves. A man looks at an apple tree, and thinks what he sees is the tree; whereas it can be proved to him that what he sees is not the tree, but rather the rays of light reflected from it; not those rays, but rather the picture of them drawn on the retina; not that picture, but rather the impression on the optic nerve; not that impression, but the report of it communicated through the nerve to the brain. It matters little at what point our science is compelled to stop in this process of tracing a perception inwards, towards the more central regions of the bodily organism; we may be still in the infancy of our knowledge on this head; but

we already know so much as that what we directly see, hear, or touch, is not the object itself, but something intermediate between the object and the mind. In other words, we know enough to emancipate ourselves from the popular belief. This being so, let us venture a little further.

"There is no possible knowledge of the world," says one of the most recent English metaphysicians of the idealist school, "except in reference to our minds. Knowledge means a state of mind; the notion of material things is a mental thing. We are incapable of discussing the existence of an independent material world; the very act is a contradiction. We can speak only of a world presented to our own minds. By an illusion of language, we fancy that we are capable of contemplating a world which does not enter into our own mental existence; but the attempt belies itself, for this contemplation is an effort of mind."¹

Idealism, in its various forms, is the development of the principle here stated,—that it is impossible for mind to come into direct intercommunication with not-mind or matter.

Everything that enters upon the consciousness must, it is argued, by the very fact of entering upon it, become a part of the consciousness itself; but my consciousness is part of me,—in other words, is, or is part of, my mind. Between natures so contrary to, or at least so unlike, one another, as mind and matter, there can be no direct contact. Such is the argument—and the whole of it.

Three stages of idealism are to be noted, as having, in this country at least, been developed successively from one another.

The first kind, which is that adopted by Locke, sets out with an assumption, unphilosophical enough, that there is

¹ Professor Bain. *The Senses and the Intellect*, pp. 370-371.

a world of matter, though it is a world of which the mind can have no direct cognizance; and it proceeds to construct a machinery for bridging over the space between matter and mind. This machinery consists of idea-images, —a species of spectral or quasi mental counterparts of material objects. These act as envoys between mind and matter, exhibiting to the mind pictures which, as being mental, can find entrance there, while, as being the exact imitations and counterfeits of material objects, the mind by this means becomes practically as well informed about material objects as if it were capable of contact with the objects themselves. This theory may be called crude or latent idealism.

From this, to pure idealism—the idealism of Berkeley—the transition was almost inevitable. If it be true that mind cannot come into contact with matter, what reason can we possibly have, it must be asked, for supposing there is such a thing as matter? Granting that we have those modifications of mind which we call ideas, or idea-images, why should we postulate the existence of an unknown something, of which these ideas are gratuitously supposed to be the counterparts? If ideas are the sole objects of knowledge, let us at once accept them as the sole objects of existence: we know of no other; we have no valid reason for so much as conjecturing that there may be any other.

The thorough-going idealism of Berkeley, though it has had some distinguished followers, has in this country been somewhat superseded by a judicious modification of it, introduced by Brown, and assailed and ridiculed with a certain acrimony by Hamilton, under the title of Cosmothetic Idealism. Dr. Brown goes with Berkeley in holding that ideas, or in other words states of mind, are the only objects which the mind is capable of directly appre-

hending. On the other hand, as the changes in our states of mind must have causes, which we instinctively ascribe to something external to the mind, there must *be* an external universe, which is thus manifested to us in its effects, although we never are nor can be directly conscious of its existence. The proof that there is this unknown external world, or that successive phenomena are linked together in the way of cause and effect, is found in the fact that mankind universally believe so.¹

To all these systems alike, the same objection may be made; all alike are based on an assumption, which is purely gratuitous, viz,—that mind cannot by possibility come into contact with anything which is not mind. To say that the mode of such contact is incomprehensible, is saying nothing: since every ultimate fact in nature and in our own mental constitution is in like manner incomprehensible as to its modes. The assertion that mind and matter cannot come into contact would perhaps be legitimate, if we possessed a thorough and exhaustive knowledge of the properties, and so of the possibilities, of mind and matter such as they are in themselves. But, as these are absolutely unknown to us, except so far as the two exist in combination or relatively the one to the other,—that is to say, except so far as the nature of either has manifested itself upon the consciousness,—we have not the materials for determining *a priori* the laws of their possible combination.

¹ "What I term my perception of the colour, or shape, or fragrance, or taste, of a peach, is a certain state of my own mind, for my mind surely can be conscious only of its own feelings." (Lect. 23, p. 526). This conclusion, Brown goes on to say, cannot be confuted by argument; but in spite of it, men are impelled, as if by an instinct, to *believe* in the existence of an external world. This belief he does not conceive (p. 518) to be any *peculiar* intuition, but merely the effect of that more general intuition by which we are led to ascribe changes to what we term causes. See, more generally, Lectures 18, 19, 23, and 25.

For this reason, idealism, in each of its phases, may at any rate be pronounced "non-proven." It is based on an assumption which is unsusceptible of proof. We do not know so much concerning the essence of the mind as to justify our regarding it as being, like an oyster, shut up within a crust which prevents contact with external objects, rather than like the nervous tissues of the human body, *en rapport*, inexplicably indeed, yet unquestionably, with objects external to them. But it is not enough that we should be thus neutral on the question: it must be maintained, not merely that the theory of idealism is baseless, but that it is unsound.

The idealism of Berkeley is the most logical of the three: but it violates the first condition of any philosophy which has a positive side—however the case may stand with absolute scepticism or pure nihilism—in disowning submission to a clearly recognized, instinctive, belief of the human mind; the belief, namely, that, in some of our conscious acts or impressions, our mind is in direct contact with objects external to ourselves.

The prevalence of this belief is too notorious to require proof. Hamilton has quoted, amongst other testimonies on the part of idealists and sceptics, a very emphatic admission of the fact, made by Hume. "It seems evident," says Hume, who in this concession—Hamilton remarks—must be allowed to express the common acknowledgment of philosophers, "that when men follow this blind and powerful instinct of nature, they always suppose the very images, presented by the senses, to be the external objects, and never entertain any suspicion, that the one are nothing but representations of the other. This very table, which we see white, and which we feel hard, is believed to exist, independent of our perception, and to be something external to our mind which perceives it. Our presence

bestows not being on it; our absence does not annihilate it. It preserves its existence, uniform and entire, independent of the situation of intelligent beings, who perceive or contemplate it. But this universal and primary opinion of all men is soon destroyed by the slightest philosophy, which teaches us that nothing can ever be present to the mind but an image or perception, and that the senses are only the inlets through which these images are perceived, without being ever able to produce any immediate intercourse between the mind and the object."¹

As regards pure idealism, then, we are at liberty to choose between absolute scepticism, which is the only logical result, as has been seen, of a refusal to acknowledge the validity of a "universal and primary opinion" of mankind, and the rejection of this theory, which avowedly necessitates such a refusal.

The modified forms of idealism, as well the cruder as the latest, have all the weakness of pure idealism, together with special infirmities of their own, naturally resulting from their want of logical consistency.

The older theory, which supposes matter to exist, and to be represented to mind through the medium of ide-images, has been—I suppose it may without harshness be said—demolished by M. Cousin. The only ground for framing such a hypothesis, he shows, has been a notion that mind and matter are for some reason or other incapable of direct contact. This difficulty, however, supposing it to exist, would not be in the least removed by the supposition of any medium. For, that property in matter, be it what it may, which from its nature is inadmissible directly into the mind, must either exist or not exist in the medium. In the former case, so much of the medium must likewise be inadmissible into the mind; in

¹ Hume, *Enquiry*, § 12, cited in Hamilton's *Lectures*, vol. ii., p. 116.

the latter, the medium must to that extent fail to represent its material counterpart. In either case, the medium is useless, since the mind receives by its help nothing which it might not equally well have received without it. This inadmissible property, which cannot find direct entrance into the mind, fails to find an entrance indirectly.

From this we may understand why it is that idealism is found constantly to tend towards a Philosophical Unitarianism—the denial of the dualism of mind and matter; sometimes dispensing with the existence of mind, sometimes with that of matter. The medium is sometimes thought of as quasi-material, and then the tendency is to make out that the mind itself, from its receptivity of the medium, must be material: sometimes as quasi-mental, and then the mind is still shut up as completely within the circle of its own operations, as though no such medium existed. The medium, in a word, does not serve to carry intelligence from the one realm to the other.

As for the "cosmothetic idealism" of Dr. Brown, popular as it may have been in its day, it seems intrinsically to be the weakest of the three. Brown believes that there is a material world, *because*—and only because—men have a primary belief that there is; he disbelieves that the mind comes into contact with, or directly apprehends, that world, *although* men have as distinct a primary belief that it does so. This inconsistency is fatal to his system.

Some notice is perhaps due to that argument in support of idealism which is founded on the fact that there are popular errors on the subject of perception. It is contended that because the belief of men in general is demonstrably erroneous in some particulars, it is therefore untrustworthy in any respect. This way of reasoning will be found on examination to be based on a confounding of primary with derivative beliefs. The very fact that a certain belief can

upon a sufficient proof of falsity be driven out of men's minds, so that they shall henceforth cease to entertain it, and practically apprehend that it has been an error, is enough to prove that such belief is not primary. Tried by this test, the difference between the two beliefs in question seems very striking. I can easily be convinced that what I come into contact with in the act of seeing is, not such an object as a star, but a ray of light radiating from it, or a picture on the retina, or a message sent along a nerve to the brain:¹ I cannot practically believe that I come into contact with nothing. That derivative beliefs may be and often are erroneous, proves nothing: but if one single primary belief be proved erroneous, the authority of all is at once overthrown, and, as has been seen, we are driven to absolute scepticism. There is nothing peculiar in the case of perception, to distinguish it from our other faculties: if this one instinct of human nature be fallacious, so are all our instincts. The choice lies between dualism and, not idealism, but nihilism.

Such is the course of reasoning on which Sir W. Hamilton maintains against idealism the position that there are two distinct spheres of being—mind and matter—and that, in perception, the one of these spheres comes into direct contact or intercommunication with the other. To this doctrine he has given the name of Natural Realism, or Dualism.

In order to complete this doctrine, and place it on a secure basis, it seems requisite to exhibit distinctly what it is with which the mind comes into contact in external perception; in other words, accurately to define a "percept."

Let it be conceded that, amongst the data of conscious-

¹ In fact, it is only from inattention if we do not perceive the difference between what we think we see, and what we do see: witness the vast difference which a man finds in the aspect of nature before and after he has trained his eyesight by such work as, for example, sketching with colours from nature.

ness, there are some portions as to which we feel the presence of the not-self, impinging as it were upon the self; the question then arises, which are those portions?

From the nature of the case, no other test can be found for distinguishing the data in question from the remainder of our consciousness, than an internal feeling, instinctive and inexplicable, by which we recognize the presence and quasi-contact of the not-self. This feeling is fortunately so distinct and strong, that there is no difficulty in tracing its presence, or noting its absence, when we have once recognized the necessity for making the attempt.

In the chapter on external perception, in the First Part, have been set down those which appear to be the distinguishing characters of a percept. When we compare one thing with another, when we draw inferences, when we remember, when we identify two percepts, when we give unity to an object apprehended by two or more senses,—in these and similar operations the mind is conscious of an activity which may be called solitary: it is not conscious of immediate mental contact with objects external to itself. None of these operations are percepts. A percept is the report of a single sense at a single moment of time. A percept differs from the remembrance or image of a percept, not necessarily in being more vivid or distinct, but by some generic difference for which we have no name, which is inexplicable to us, but of the presence of which we can never be doubtful.

The appeal to this test of direct consciousness appears to be the necessary deduction from Sir W. Hamilton's theory. His whole argument is based on the existence of such an instinctive feeling, such a sensitiveness of the mind to contact with matter, as shall enable it to discriminate between these two classes of data. If such a sense exists, it undoubtedly exists that it may be used.

Nevertheless, it seems far from clear that Hamilton had ever emancipated himself from the opinion of Reid, strangely inconsistent with his own general doctrine, that the "Primary qualities" of matter are not only as directly but even more directly apprehended in perception than the Secondary qualities.

Those which have been called the primary qualities of matter—as, extension, solidity, figure, mobility, and number—appear to be distinguished from the secondary qualities, as colour, hardness, and the like, in this,—that the former are supposed to be inseparably inherent in matter as such. But how do we come to know that these qualities are thus inseparably inherent? Clearly in no other way than by a comparison of observations. We observe that in whatever way, through whatever sense, we acquire any knowledge concerning matter, we always find these qualities to be present. Thus the primary qualities are "common sensibles," *κοινα ἄισθητα*, being made known to us, not by this or that sense singly, but by all the senses: and it is not until we have ascertained the fact, that no sense exhibits to us matter divested of such qualities, that we can pronounce any one of them to be primary. This knowledge then requires a comparison of dissimilar sensations, and an extraction of one common quality from the sensations so compared. But the comparison of sensations, tried by the test above named, must be pronounced an act of the mind alone. We cannot compare sensations without the aid of memory, which is an act purely mental, if representations are purely mental, as our consciousness appears distinctly to affirm. We must conclude, then, that the sole objects of perception, properly so called, are the secondary qualities of matter.¹

¹ This seems to be the theory of Mr. Mansel. "The primary qualities," he says, "are the universal attributes of body, common to every mode of its

From this we are led a step further, and it is one which I confess I do not take without hesitation. Have we the right to say that we *perceive* differences? Is not the discrimination of difference between objects perceived a purely mental act? It is true that we perceive objects which differ. The concrete fact—the perception of such objects—is an act in which mind and matter are brought into juxtaposition: but the act by which we bring together two such objects, and distinctly realize in thought the circumstance of their differing thus or thus, appears to result from an activity of the mind alone, withdrawing itself from its contact with matter, and working in solitude. That this is really so will appear, if we consider that a difference is a thing which cannot be realized to the imagination—cannot be represented—from which it may reasonably be inferred that it never has been “presented.” Every noting of difference contains a negative: there is in one of the objects something which is not in the other: but negatives, though objects of thought, are not objects of presentation.

A percept, then, as has been said, is the datum of a single sense at a single moment. It is concrete, positive, and singular. It contains no matter of inference, selection, or comparison. What we directly apprehend in contact with matter is, such phenomena as colours, savours, tactual qualities, and the like. All beyond this is contributed by the purely personal activity of our own minds.

existence as an object of consciousness. Hence *they are not*, properly speaking, *known by sense*, but by intellect, having no special organ adapted to their perception, but being equally present in every exercise of the bodily senses. Hence, too, they cannot, in their pure form, be depicted to the sense or the imagination, but require in every instance to be united with one or other of the secondary qualities which are the proper objects of the several senses.” (Philosophy of Consciousness, p. 110.)

CHAPTER IV.

SUBSTANCE.

ALL matter of knowledge is in the first instance exhibited to each of us under the aspect of data or facts of consciousness : everything is spread, so to speak, upon this canvass : nevertheless, we find ourselves believing in, or rather taking for granted we know not why or how, the existence of objects and of a percipient subject or self.

Of our senses, each one brings us into contact with some single phase or aspect of these "objects," having no community with that presented by any other sense. Through our sight, the mind impinges upon colours, and those only ; through our touch, upon roughness, hardness, or other such qualities ; through our hearing, upon noises. Redness, roughness, and trumpet sound have between them no community of nature, so far as we can discover ; and there is nothing about them, considered simply as data of consciousness, which should lead us to link them together, as belonging to some unknown substance or substratum, not directly apprehended by the mind. Yet this is what appears in fact to take place. Everything, without exception, of which our senses directly inform us, is, with or without reason, thought by us to be a *quality*—in other words, to inhere in some substance.

This propensity of the mind, in virtue of which the isolated and piecemeal reports of our several senses are

bound together into larger parcels, appears to have singularly perplexed and disquieted, not to say irritated, several philosophers of the sensationalist school. It has appeared to them a little ridiculous. The ill-conditioned race of mortals, not content with the brave show of many-coloured phenomena which is continually streaming forth before their senses, has obstinately refused to regard these phenomena as so many isolated appearances floating loose in the sky, but has invented phrases absolutely without meaning, and a machinery as cumbrous and unreal as the vortices of Descartes, to explain, forsooth, and account for that which they cannot be content quietly to enjoy. Why should colours be qualities? of what are they qualities? What do we mean by qualities inhering or "sticking in" substances? Give at least an intelligible account, if you can, of that which you understand by a "substance." Thus, not content with simply denying that substances exist or can exist, writers of this school are sometimes inclined to scoff at and insult the weakness of the human race for believing that they do.

By this means, the good old orthodox doctrine of substance and qualities, though it be still taught to young men in the Universities in text books of logic, and still is somewhat current in popular discourse, has come to be very much discredited among metaphysicians, at all events amongst those who are popularly regarded as having the best claim to philosophical orthodoxy.

Before entering upon a serious examination of this doctrine, it may be well to listen a little to our sensationalists.

Let us begin with David Hume; who, as might have been anticipated, contents himself with stating the difficulty, without an attempt, and obviously without a wish, to solve it.

"'Tis confessed," says Hume, "by the most judicious

philosophers, that our ideas of bodies are nothing but collections formed by the mind of the ideas of the several distinct sensible qualities, of which objects are composed, and which we see to have a constant union with each other." How is it, he proceeds to ask, that whereas the ideas (representations) which we call qualities, as a red colour, a roughness to the touch, and the like, are many and dissimilar, we yet bring them by parcels together, and regard the compound as one thing? This he accounts for in the following manner:—"When we gradually follow an object in its successive changes, the smooth progress of the thought makes us ascribe an identity to the succession; because 'tis by a similar act of the mind we consider an unchangeable object. When we compare its situation after a considerable change, the progress of the thought is broken; and consequently we are presented with the idea of diversity: in order to reconcile which contradictions the imagination is apt to feign something unknown and invisible, which it supposes to continue the same under all these variations; and this unintelligible something it calls a *substance*, or original and first matter." Having thus feigned a substance, the imagination, he tells us, proceeds to make the delusion complete and self-consistent, by transmuting all sensible appearances into things called qualities or attributes of these imaginary substrata. "The notion of *accidents* is an unavoidable consequence," he says, "of this method of thinking with regard to substances and substantial forms; nor can we forbear looking upon colours, sounds, tastes, figures, and other properties of objects, as existences which cannot subsist apart, but require a subject of inhesion to sustain and support them . . . This conceit, however, is no more reasonable than any of the foregoing. Every quality being a distinct thing from another, may be conceived to exist apart, and may exist apart, not only

from every other quality, but from that unintelligible chimera of a substance." These figments of the imagination, Hume goes on to say, having once been pieced together, and driven well into men's minds, have ever since appeared perfectly satisfactory to the vulgar, who are not hard to please about such matters. Philosophers, however, began to find out how slight was the foundation on which they rested, and, not being able either to remain contented with, or to disentangle themselves from, the fixed opinion of the multitude, were for a great while in a very lamentable condition. "But," he continues, "as nature seems to have observed a kind of justice and compensation in everything, she has not neglected philosophers more than the rest of the creation; but has reserved them a consolation amidst all their disappointments and afflictions. This consolation principally consists in their invention of the words *faculty* and *occult quality*. For, it being usual, after the frequent use of terms which are really significant and intelligible, to omit the idea which we would express by them, and to preserve only the custom by which we recal the idea at pleasure; so it naturally happens that, after the frequent use of terms which are wholly insignificant and unintelligible, we fancy them to be on the same footing with the precedent, and to have a secret meaning which we might discover by reflection. By this means these philosophers set themselves at ease, and arrive at last, by an illusion, at the same indifference which the people attain by their stupidity, and true philosophers by their moderate scepticism. They need only say that any phenomenon which puzzles them arises from a 'faculty' or an 'occult quality,' and there is an end of all dispute and enquiry upon the matter." (Hum. Nat., i., pp. 383-391.)

Hume was far too penetrating a thinker not to have been aware that the same way of reasoning, by which it

was to be shown that no substances existed in external nature, would with equal force annihilate the thinking subject, the I, considered as a person or unit, leaving the so-called self a mere aggregation of successive thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and other data of consciousness. If there are no things without us, except colours, tastes, sounds, and the like, there is no self to apprehend these colours, etc., but only the thoughts and feelings which do in fact successively apprehend them. This view he sets forth with his usual graceful clearness, and good-humoured enjoyment of the perplexities into which he throws his unfortunate readers.

"There are some philosophers," says Hume, "who imagine we are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our self; that we feel its existence and its continuance in existence; and are certain, beyond the evidence of a demonstration, both of its perfect identity and simplicity. The strongest sensation, the most violent passion, say they, instead of distracting us from this view, only fix it the more intensely, and make us consider their influence on *self* either by their pain or pleasure. To attempt a further proof of this, were to weaken its evidence; since no proof can be derived from any fact, of which we are so intimately conscious; nor is there anything of which we can be certain, if we doubt of this.

"Unluckily, all these positive assertions are contrary to that very experience which is pleaded for them, nor have we any idea of *self*, after the manner it is here explained. For, from what impression could this idea be derived? This question it is impossible to answer without a manifest contradiction and absurdity; and yet it is a question which must necessarily be answered, if we would have the idea of self pass for clear and intelligible. It must be some one impression that gives rise to every real idea. But self or

person is not any one impression, but that to which our several impressions and ideas are supposed to have a reference. If any impression gives rise to the idea of self, that impression must continue invariably the same through the whole course of our lives; since self is supposed to exist after that manner. But there is no impression constant and invariable. Pain and pleasure, grief and joy, passions and sensations, succeed each other, and never all exist at the same time. It cannot therefore be from any of these impressions, or from any other, that the idea of self is derived; and consequently there is no such idea.

“For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception. . . . If any one, upon serious and unprejudiced reflection, thinks he has a different notion of *himself*, I must confess I can reason no longer with him. All I can allow him is, that he may be in the right as well as I, and that we are essentially different in this particular. He may perhaps perceive something simple and continued, which he calls *himself*; though I am certain there is no such principle in me.

“But, setting aside some metaphysicians of this kind, I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind, that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions which succeed one another with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement. Our eyes cannot turn in their sockets without varying their perceptions. Our thought is still more variable than our sight; and all our other senses and faculties contribute to this change; nor is there any single power of the soul,

which remains unalterably the same, perhaps for one moment. The mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance, pass, re-pass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations. There is properly no *simplicity* in it at one time, nor *identity* in different; whatever natural propension we may have to imagine that simplicity and identity. The comparison of the theatre must not mislead us. They are the successive perceptions only, that constitute the mind; nor have we the most distant notion of the place where those scenes are represented, or of the materials of which it is composed" (Hum. Nat. i., pp. 436-440).

I have ventured upon these extracts, long as they are, because I believe there is expressed in them precisely the true state of the question, as it presents itself to those philosophers who ignore or reject the authority of primary beliefs. Hume, it will be seen, is really, though perhaps not in terms, a philosophical Unitarian. Accommodating his language by turns to those who believe matter and those who believe mind to exist, he speaks first of "sensible qualities" and afterwards of "perceptions;" but in reality it is evident that these two are in his estimation one and the same thing. One is apt to speak of colours, sounds, and the like, as if they were somehow generically different from passions and feelings; but, once deny substance to one and the other, and this distinction becomes unintelligible; they may differ, indeed, but it is only as a colour differs from a sound, or as red from green: if any wider difference is postulated, this must be a mere matter of convenience in classifying: that which to the popular mind constitutes the essential difference between a colour and a passion—viz., that the former comes from without and the latter springs from within the self—has been eliminated.

This negation of substance is the doctrine likewise of Brown and of James Mill. According to Brown, what we call bodies "are *one*, not in nature but in thought; as one thousand individuals, that in nature must always be one thousand, receive a sort of unity that is relative merely to our conception, when ranked by us as a single regiment, or as many regiments become *one* by forming together an army" (§ i. 96.¹ See also Cause and Effect, 172, 184). Mr. Mill is equally emphatic. According to this philosopher, our ideas of individual objects are neither more nor less than clusters or aggregates of our ideas of qualities. The simultaneous or "synchronical" existence before our minds of a determinate mixture of red colours, of a certain odour, of a softness to the touch, and so on, constitutes an aggregate to which I am pleased to give the name of, suppose, a rose. "But what *is* the rose," he asks, "beside the colour, the form, and so on? Not knowing what it is, but supposing it to be something, we invent a name to stand for it. We call it a *substratum*. This substratum, when closely examined, is not distinguishable from Cause. It is the cause of the qualities; that is, the cause of the causes of our sensations." (Anal. i. 262, 263.)

Mr. Mill admits that his doctrine is at variance with the opinion of men in general. "The term *quality* or *qualities* of an object," he says, "seems to imply that the qualities are one thing, the object another. And this, in some indistinct way, is no doubt the opinion of the great majority of mankind. Yet the absurdity of it strikes the understanding the moment it is mentioned. The qualities

¹ In the speculations concerning Substance, with which Dr. Brown commences the course of metaphysics in his lectures, there seems to be a confusion between chemical and metaphysical analysis. The question for the metaphysician is not, of what particles is this or that body ultimately composed, or, what are the properties of those particles, taken singly or conjointly, but, how have I come by the notion that these various and dissimilar impressions, of colour, weight, hardness, etc., all belong to a substance or body which is one.

of an object are the whole of the object. What is there beside the qualities? In fact, they are convertible terms: the qualities are the object, and the object is the qualities." (Ib. ii., p. 53.)

Mr. John Stuart Mill, in a cautious and well-considered article on this subject, contents himself with summing up the principal arguments for and against the existence of substances, though without suspecting, apparently, that it might be possible, on the affirmative side, to contend that substance is something other than the mere *cause*. "A body," he says, "may be defined, the external cause to which we ascribe our sensations" (Logic, Book i., chap. 3, § 6). And the question under controversy is, in his view, simply this—whether such external causes exist or not.

This may suffice to illustrate the position taken up by the writers of the sensationalist school, with reference to the doctrine of substance and attribute. This scepticism, which from the vantage ground of philosophical insight smiles with good-humoured contempt at the odd illusions to which the vast majority of mankind appear subject, is the inevitable consequence of the disregard of primary beliefs.

For us, however, the question is one to be approached from an entirely different point of view, even as regards the arrangement of its terms.

The point first to be considered is this—What is in fact the belief of the human race concerning substances: secondly, can this belief be explained away, or otherwise got rid of, as illusory; failing which, if we find it to be a belief universal and primary, we shall be compelled to conclude that the thing believed is true.

First, as to the matter of fact: men believe, in all countries, and have believed, as far back as the structure of any known language records, in the existence of that which is

denoted by nouns substantive : this appears to be proved from the fact that they have invented such nouns, and have been using them so long and so generally. The things which they have seen, tasted, touched, or otherwise come into contact with through their senses, have, without a single exception, been styled adjectives : in other words have been annexed to substantives, of which they are regarded as mere qualities—whatever that may mean. That of which they are qualities is a something which no human eye has seen, no touch encountered.

To say this is in fact only repeating in a different form what was said in the preceding chapter. Men believe that, in perception, the two spheres of mind and matter come into a species of juxtaposition—that the one impinges upon the other. The existence of this belief supposes that, in addition to the sensible perceptions themselves, men have a belief or notion that there exist likewise these two spheres—mind and matter. If it can be proved to us ever so clearly that the only things of which we are or can be directly conscious at first hand, are the perceptions and feelings—*i.e.* the presentations or data of consciousness itself—and that our possible knowledge is limited to these and to inferences deducible from these—so that the existence of a substratum, whether material or mental, shall be shown to lie outside of all our possible knowledge—so much the more clearly will emerge this unexplained fact, that men universally believe in such substrata or substances. It may possibly be demonstrated that the belief has no external foundation : but, if the belief survive that demonstration, its vitality proves that it has a foundation in the fabric of our own minds.

When I hold in my hand a red billiard-ball, and look at it, I receive three distinct sensible impressions—I see a red colour, I touch a smooth rounded surface, and I am

conscious of a determinate weight. These three impressions are perfectly distinct from one another. These three together make up the whole of what I learn by immediate presentation concerning this billiard-ball; for we may here disregard, as complicating without aiding the argument, those muscular sensations which physiologists have recently deduced or attempted to deduce from the contractions or expansions of the pupil of the eye, or from the phenomena of double vision. For practical purposes, these three—the colour, the smoothness, and the weight—may be taken to represent the presentations which I attribute to my billiard-ball.

These three dissimilar data I regard, and cannot but regard, as belonging to one thing, which is external to, and exists independently of, my self: and I also, from another point of view, regard them as belonging to one and the same thing, namely, as all being perceptions of that thinking or perceiving unit, my self.

Another fact to be noted is this—that I place the phenomena at an equal distance, so to speak, from these two unities. I am unable to say that colour, for example, belongs more properly to the object than to the perceiving mind, or *vice versa*; and so of smoothness, and so of weight. These, which we may call the phenomena of perception, appear, from one point of view, to result from a power in the object to excite certain impressions in us, and, from another point of view, to be the effect of a receptivity or susceptibility, in the mind itself, to receive such particular kinds of impression and no other.

To return to the billiard-ball. If I believe this ball to be one thing, I also believe that one thing to be related to the colour not more or less closely nor in any other respect differently than it is related to the smoothness, or than it is related to the weight. It is something which, so to speak,

underlies all three in the same manner. But the three phenomena themselves are recognized by me as diverse, having in themselves no community even of kind. That common meeting-ground, the substance of which these are attributes, must, then, be a thing in itself, not a mere aggregation of the three phenomena. And this seems to be an opinion which the mind cannot really divest itself of. It seems outrageous to our unmetaphysical common sense, when we are told that so much redness, so much smoothness, and so much weight, added together, *are* a billiard-ball. Yet this is what Mr. James Mill maintains, when he says "the attributes *are* the substance."

Such, then, appears to be, in fact, the belief of mankind concerning substance. We come now to the second question: Can this belief be explained away, as derivative, and so, or otherwise, possibly illusory?

The peculiar relation of the many phenomena to the one thing in itself, which we term the relation of quality and substance, is not, I think, the artificial invention of the schoolmen; further than that the schoolmen, or older metaphysicians, may have first given a name to that which had previously existed in and operated upon men's minds, without their knowing why. The relation of substance and attribute was virtually recognized by the first man who gave names to objects: he recognized a unity underlying the diversity of appearance; and the bare notion of this unity beneath the manifold appears necessarily to involve either this, or some such notion of a relation between attribute and substance.

Can it be said that the notion of substance is produced by mere "association of ideas," founded on the fact that the several phenomena which the mind binds together as belonging to one substance, do, and always have, come before the mind simultaneously?

This is a favourite doctrine with the sensationalists, and must therefore be considered with some care.

It no doubt is true that one reason why the mind appropriates such or such individual percepts to one and the same substance, is, their coming one in company with another, and their being remembered as having kept this companionship constantly. It may be that the empirical conception of substance and attributes, as existing with reference to this or that particular object-matter, is one of gradual growth in the mind, proceeding piece-meal in the way of induction. But, in order that the mind, from repeated observation of this constant concomitance of certain phenomena, should proceed to the synthetic or ampliative notion that the things which thus approach it in companionship are attributes of one common substance, it appears to be necessary that the notion of substance itself, as an *a priori* notion, belief, or form of thought, should have pre-existed within the mind. Were it not so, it would seem impossible to account for the inference, from the obscured fact of concomitance, to the peculiar relation of substance and attribute; still more, for the universality of this inference on the part of the entire human race. That two or more things should be so linked together as invariably to come and go before the mind in company, would show indeed that they were fellow-travellers, but by no means (were we not specially framed so as to draw this inference) that they all were so many qualities of one and the same substratum or substance. This is an ampliative, not an explicative judgment: it brings in some new matter, not contained in the terms of the propositions which lead to it.

It is to be noted that the "concomitance" here spoken of is a different thing from juxtaposition in space. A smooth touch and a red colour may no doubt be present to

the senses at the same moment : and this particular touch, and this particular disposition of colour, may be remembered to have always come in company with each other as regards time : but when we pretend that the two percepts are in juxtaposition with one another in space, we say that which is absolutely unmeaning, except in the way of inference from the judgment, which must previously have been formed, that the two percepts are connected together as belonging to one and the same object. Till I have thus connected together, by a judgment, the red colour and the smooth touch, I do not even understand what is meant by the assertion that the two phenomena occupy the same space. The coincidence of two percepts, belonging to different senses, is, then, solely a coincidence with reference to time.

Now, that coincidence in time is not the cause of our belief in the law of substance—though it may be the empirical occasion of this belief's being evolved with reference to some individual objects—demonstrably appears from this, that we have the belief in a substance, with regard to which such coincidence in time not only does not always, but never exists—viz., the perceiving substance, or ego. Subjectively considered, our percepts, emotions, thoughts, and in a word acts of mind, follow one another, and never are simultaneous : yet we bring the whole stream with its incessant changes into unity, regarding all as so many acts of one and the same substance, the self.

When once we have distinctly recognized the fact that we never come into direct mental contact with that mysterious force or essence which we call our self—that what we call self-introspection is in reality the mere apperception of a certain number of isolated acts or energies which this essence puts forth—we see at once that we have no ground whatever for thinking that a self exists, except

that we are assured so by a belief, which, as inexplicable, simple, and universal, must be regarded as a primary fact of our nature. It appears, indeed, to be a portion of a still more general fact or law of mind—viz., that law by which we ascribe all phenomena, outward as well as inward, to certain substances. This law, in its generality, may be termed, the law or primary belief of substance.

If this is a primary belief, as it appears to be when tried by the tests enumerated above, we are bound, on the principles here laid down, to accept the conclusion that the thing so believed is true: in other words, that there is a universe of matter, and that there is a universe of mind. And thus we are brought a second time to Hamilton's Natural Dualism.

Let us now for a moment look back over the ground we have travelled:—

The way in which we have been led to the doctrine of Natural Dualism (or Realism), so far as regards the doctrine of substance, appears to have been this:—We are conscious of presentations which have differences: of these presentations, we attribute some portions or attributes to the activity of a self, and the remainder to the operation of forces external to the self: why we do this we cannot tell, but it is the fact that we do so; and, when we come to reflect on what we have been doing, we see that we have all along been assuming the existence of these twofold substances, a self and a not-self, although our senses never reached so far, nor yet our internal presentations, as directly to apprehend the existence of either. The belief in this unknown something, therefore, has existed in us, and been operative, before we were conscious of it.

This view of the matter enables us easily to emancipate ourselves from that scepticism of Professor Ferrier, which was referred to in the Introduction. The Professor would

have us believe that there is a self and a not-self, but that it is impossible for us accurately, or, indeed, at all, to distinguish, amongst the data of consciousness, what portions belong to the one and what to the other. Certainly the two portions are in many particulars intimately blended together. Still, we appear to possess a certain instinctive faculty, by which we can, at any rate to some extent, distinguish between the two. When I am conscious, for example, of an act of will, I at the same time believe, and cannot but believe, that it is an act of my own. When my will, without being changed, is hindered from passing into action, I believe, and cannot but believe, that the thing which hinders it is something other than myself. In fact, it is because I have this instinct or belief, and from no other cause, that I am led to think I know that there exists a self and a not-self. That which, in the order of time, evolves the belief that my self exists, is the fact that I have been attributing this or that datum of consciousness to the activity of my self. To say that the belief which is thus evolved is trustworthy, and yet that the belief which has been the occasion of evolving it is untrustworthy, and this without pointing out any difference between the characters of the two beliefs, appears purely gratuitous. It is very much as if, because I suppose myself to see a red colour, I were to conclude that the red colour certainly is there, but that I cannot be certain that I see it. The first certainty depends on, and is bounded by, the second. Assuming that my sole ground of knowledge concerning the red colour is my seeming to see it, whatever doubtfulness there may be as to my really seeing it, there must be at least as much doubtfulness as to its really being there. So of the self and the non-self: all that I know concerning the existence of a self being derived in the way of inference from the instinct with which I appropriate to myself certain

portions of my consciousness, it follows that, if the instinct itself is illusory, the inference drawn from it must fall to the ground.

Mr. Mansel, in his "Philosophy of Consciousness," appears to draw a distinction between our belief in substances external to the self, and what he calls our direct consciousness of the self, which I must confess myself unable to comprehend.

"Let system-makers," he writes, "say what they will, the unsophisticated sense of mankind refuses to acknowledge that mind is but a bundle of states of consciousness, as matter is (possibly) a bundle of sensible qualities. There may be no material substratum distinct from the attributes of extension, figure, colour, hardness, etc. Matter may be merely a name for the aggregate of these, for we have no immediate consciousness of anything beyond them; but, unless our whole consciousness is a delusion and a lie, *self* is something more than the aggregate of sensations, thoughts, volitions, etc." (p. 181).

How are we to reconcile this way of reasoning with the following sentence, which may be found on the preceding page of the same volume?—"The attributes of mind, as well as those of body, are known only by their effects. I know that I have the power of thinking, only because I actually think,—as I know that fire is capable of burning, only because it actually burns." (p. 180.)

Is it the fact that the "unsophisticated sense of mankind" revolts strongly against the negation of substance as applied to mind, and does not revolt strongly against the negation of substance as applied to matter? It seems admitted on all hands—it is evidenced in the very structure of language—that the unsophisticated belief of mankind in all ages has been this:—Mind exists: material objects likewise exist; colours, tastes, tactual impressions,

and the like, are as truly qualities of bodies when viewed in one aspect, as they are attributes or faculties of mind, viewed in another. Without attempting explicitly to deny that such is the belief of mankind, Mr. Mansel holds that, as regards matter, this belief may possibly be illusory, *because* "we have no immediate consciousness" of material substance; yet that, as regards mind, this belief cannot be illusory, *although* we have no immediate consciousness of the substance of the mind—for this last concession is certainly contained, though under a different form of words, in the sentences quoted from p. 180 of his book.

CHAPTER V.

‘SPACE AND TIME.

WHAT is Space?

It is the misfortune of philosophy, that its problems are matters which appear to the mass of mankind excessively simple. Philosophers expend immense labour and ingenuity in giving an account of that which other men are continually taking as a matter of course; and, what is worse, the philosophers appear to account for it very unsatisfactorily.

Every one, for example, believes that he has a very clear opinion as to what space is, and that the matter is too plain to admit of doubt. The first person I meet in the street, if I put the question to him, would probably tell me: Space is that which all material substances, which the earth and the whole universe of solar systems, occupy without filling. Can we conceive the possibility of a world's existing without space—nay, of Nothing's existing without space: in other words, can we conceive space as possibly annihilated? Certainly not, he would answer. Can we set limits to space—can we conceive or think that space has boundaries anywhere? The supposition, he would unhesitatingly reply, is absurd.

There are questions, however, if I were to pursue the enquiry, to which my friend in the street would not be so prompt in his answers. For example: Is space a quality of the mind, or a property of the objects which are appre-

hended by the senses, or a thing external to the mind and existing not in objects but of itself? Apparently no one thinks that space is a quality of the mind. Bodies, we say, are in space: they occupy or take up room; they have a place—and that place we consider as a portion of space. Whether mind occupies space, we scarcely can tell. While I am thinking, I confess that I believe myself to be thinking somewhere, *i.e.* in some place: I fancy that the thinking process is somehow going on within my own bodily frame; and it seems to me that other people do so too: but it never enters my head to say that thoughts take up room—that they occupy any quantity of space. Whether either one portion or the other of this belief of mine be well founded, I cannot tell: there seems to be no way of verifying or contradicting it: the reader will judge for himself whether he shares it. Holding it, however, it appears to me that the having a place, and the occupying or filling up of space, are two distinct and separable conceptions; of which the first is common to matter and mind, but the second peculiar to matter. Space, then, if this be so, belongs to matter, not to mind. Is Space, then, a *quality* of matter? Apparently not: for, if the matter be removed, the space remains behind; besides, matter does not fill up the whole of space, but space is thought to extend beyond it. Matter is finite and contingent: space is infinite and necessary: the more extensive cannot be contained in, *i.e.* cannot be a quality of, the less extensive.

Shall we say, then, that space is a thing existing, externally to the mind, but existing not in objects but independently by itself? To this we seem driven, if we say that it exists, that it is not in the mind but external to it, and that it is not a quality of material objects. But now comes the question—this thing, external to us and independent of the bodies we see or touch or otherwise

encounter by our senses, how do we know that it exists? through what avenue has the knowledge come to us? It does not come through perception or self-intuition; we cannot see or touch it, taste, smell, or hear it. Yet the matter of fact remains—everybody without exception has the notion of space. Where has it come from?

At this point I am afraid that our friend picked up in the street will be apt to grow impatient, and to refer us to our books of metaphysics.

Let us turn, then, to our metaphysicians. I am afraid I must pass over the sensationalists, whose explanations have been reduced *ad absurdum* by Hume, and now must be regarded as obsolete.¹ When once the fact is fairly recognized, that space is regarded as necessarily existing and as infinite, one sees at a glance that the notion of it cannot be obtained by abstraction or isolation of some common property belonging to objects which are contingent and finite. We must listen to Kant, Cousin, Hamilton, and Mansel.

In order really to understand the celebrated doctrine of Kant, that space is the “pure form” of intuition, as distinguished from the matter or empirical contents of it, we ought to lay aside for the time all realistic notions concerning the objective existence of a material world, and to

¹ Hume's disquisitions on this subject (see *Human Nature*, vol. i., pp. 65–100) are, however, extremely interesting, and it is not without reluctance that I refrain from quotation and criticism. Hume pushes the leading doctrine of his school—viz., that every idea, that is, every notion, must be the counterpart of some impression (intuition)—to its legitimate conclusion, and infers from it that we can think no quality of space which transcends experience. Hence we cannot conceive space as infinitely divisible: there is a minimum of thinkable space, which answers to the *minimum visibile*. The definition of a mathematical point is consequently absurd and unintelligible: the thing not only cannot be, it cannot even be thought. The same reasoning would show that space not only cannot be infinite, but cannot be thought to be so. Hume acknowledges, however, that space is in fact thought under conditions which may transcend experience: from which perverse tendency in the human mind he of course draws food for his scepticism.

place ourselves at the point of view from which an idealist like Kant would look at the question.

For this purpose, we are to suppose a self or intelligence which apprehends the presence of a number of phenomena, such as colours, sounds, and tactual impressions: what these are in themselves, he (the supposed self) does not care to inquire; what concerns him is that they are isolated, contingent, and apparently given to the mind from without, not self-engendered. He finds also that these phenomena are distributed in space. Space, however, is not given to him from without: it comes through no known avenue, it transcends the conditions of all knowledge derived through the senses. He concludes, then, that it is he himself who distributes these phenomena in space. Space is a law of his own being: it is the canvass upon which he himself spreads the colours which are given to him through the consciousness. Here comes in the distinction between form and matter, familiar to logicians. "The Form is what the mind impresses upon its perceptions of things, which are the matter; Form therefore means *mode of viewing* objects that are presented to the mind, the objects themselves being the matter."¹ The block of marble given to the sculptor is the matter; that which he himself contributes, in hewing the statue out of it, is the form. Perhaps a better illustration of the distinction may be found in the growth of substances which have their principle of vitality—the formative principle—within themselves. Those particles of nutriment which are supplied in the earth, and are absorbed by the acorn as it lies there, and afterwards by the roots it sends forth, are (with the acorn itself) the matter which by degrees is converted into the oak tree; the form of the tree—the disposition of its branches, the shape of its leaves, and the like, are the result of a forma-

¹ Thomson's Laws of Thought, p. 21.

tive principle which existed *a priori* within the acorn before it began to swell and grow. The human mind, on its entrance upon life, is in a condition analogous to that of the acorn when it begins to have stirrings of vitality within the ground. The variegated mass of isolated impressions of colours, touches, and the like, which are successively absorbed into the mind, are spread by it, in virtue of a law which the mind already carries unconsciously within itself, upon this—call it canvass, if you will, or spectrum of a camera—at any rate upon this field of mental vision pre-existent within the mind itself—to which we give the name of space.

Space, then, according to Kant, is the *form* of external intuition. This theory gets rid of some of the difficulties which have been alluded to. Space, on this view, may be infinite: for we do not know that the forms of our own mental faculties are finite, or are limited in such a manner as only to apprehend the finite. Again, space, on this view, not only may, but must, be conceived as existing necessarily: its contradictory must be inconceivable to the human mind; for it is evident that if our mental apprehension be cast in a given form, it can have no power to conceive or grasp notions or intuitions after some other form, inconsistent with that which has been assigned to it.

Kant's theory gives us, then, the infinity and necessity of space; and to that extent is in harmony with the general belief of mankind. Is it, however, in harmony—is it not incompatible with another portion of this general belief—a portion as distinctly stamped upon the non-metaphysical minds of all men—viz., that space exists, not within ourselves, but externally to, and independently of, ourselves?

According to Kant, one great proof of the position that space is a form contributed by the mind itself, is this: we

ourselves first begin to assign to phenomena a place external to ourselves, that is, in space ; which we could not do, if we had not already within ourselves the intuition of space as existing. "Space," he says, "is not a conception which has been derived from outward experiences. For, in order that certain sensations may relate to something without me, that is, to something which occupies a different part of space from that in which I am—and again, in order that I may represent them not merely as out of me and near to each other, but also in separate places—the representation of space must already exist as a foundation : consequently, the representation of space cannot be borrowed from the relations of external phenomena through experience ; but, on the contrary, this external experience is itself only possible through that antecedent representation." (Pure Reason, Part I., § 2). This seems perfectly true, so far as it goes. May we not, however, go on a little further, and enquire *why* is it that the mind does in this fashion spread out certain portions of its data of consciousness in places external to itself and side by side with one another ? Is it not because the mind first believes that the objects themselves *are* external to itself and side by side with one another—in other words, are in space ? Is there not an innate, though no doubt latent or but half-conscious, belief ; which belief may be considered as a form of intuition, perhaps, but also as something more than a form ? This belief seems to be more than a form, inasmuch as it has contents—*i.e.* matter contained in it. These are points which have to be considered presently : in the meantime let us proceed with our consultation of the authorities.

Neither Cousin nor Mansel add much to Kant. Cousin, in his Lectures on the Philosophy of Kant (Lect. 4, pp. 43-52), and again in his review of Locke on the Under-

standing (chap. ii. pp. 130–144), gives a very clear exposition of the Kantian doctrine, which he appears to adopt to a certain extent. He distinguishes, however, the relative priority of empirical perception and of the *a priori* representation of space, according as we are concerned with the logical or the chronological order of sequence. On this head it may be well to quote his own words:—

“There are two sorts of origin: there are, in human cognitions, two orders of relations which it is important clearly to distinguish. Two ideas being given, we may inquire whether the one does not *suppose* the other; whether, the one being admitted, we must not admit the other likewise, or incur the reproach of inconsistency. This is the “logical order” of ideas. . . . It is at this point that the ideal school has in general taken up the question of the origin of ideas. By the origin of ideas, they commonly understand the logical filiation of ideas. Hence they could say, with their last and most illustrious interpreter, that so far is the idea of body from being the foundation of the idea of space, it is the idea of space which is the foundation—the logical condition—of the idea of body. The idea of body is given to us by the sight and the touch, that is, by experience of the senses. On the contrary, the idea of space is given to us, *on occasion of* the idea of body, by the understanding, the mind, the reason; in fine, by a faculty other than sensation. Hence the formula of Kant; the pure rational idea of space comes so little from experience that it is the condition of all experience. This bold formula holds true with perfect strictness when taken in a certain reference,—in reference to the logical order of human cognitions.” (Review of Locke, pp. 136, 137).

There is, however, M. Cousin proceeds to point out, another order of precedence amongst ideas, viz., the chronological order, the order in respect of time of their several

development within the consciousness. Chronologically, the idea of body precedes, and awakens, the idea of space. "Space is the place of bodies; he who has no idea of a body will never have the idea of the space which contains it." "Logically, idealism and Kant are right, in maintaining that the pure idea of space is the condition of the idea of body, and of experience: chronologically, empiricism and Locke are right in their turn, in holding up experience, that is, on this point, sensation, the sensations of sight and touch, as the condition of the idea of space, and of any exercise of the understanding." (ib. pp. 137-139).

In this fashion M. Cousin proposes to effect a species of compromise between Kant and Locke, or rather to harmonize the two within a more comprehensive doctrine, in conformity with the watchword of his philosophical system, Eclecticism.

Mr. Mansel, in his "Philosophy of Consciousness" (pp. 59-63), sums up with much clearness and conciseness the results of Kant's doctrine as modified by Cousin; but it can hardly be said that he has added anything of his own. Space he holds to be "the form or mental condition of our perception of external objects." Space is regarded by the mind as necessarily existing and as infinite: it cannot by itself be depicted to the imagination: it transcends the limits of experience. He terms it a relation—a dictum, which I confess I do not altogether understand, nor know how to reconcile with other portions of his doctrine. He differs from Cousin, holding space to be chronologically "in some degree," as well as logically, prior to the objects of sense. "Space," he says, "though not positively conceived as devoid of all contents, is yet necessarily conceived as separable from any given contents, and thus as independent of each in succession." Space, in fine, is "the

innate element of the ideas of sense which experience calls into actual consciousness." He notes, what has been overlooked, if not denied,¹ by previous writers, that the empirical intuition of space is not limited to perceptions of sight and touch, but extends to other senses, and perhaps to all of them; *e.g.* to percepts of sounds; an important observation, though bearing only on a matter of detail.

Before passing on to an examination of Sir W. Hamilton's doctrine, it may be well here to set down a question, which the Kantian theory naturally suggests—namely: Do *Representations* occupy space? When I recal or reproduce in my mind, by memory or imagination, one of those quasi-pictorial images of an object of sense, to which we have agreed to give the name of "representation," it seems to me that in this operation I do not travel outside of the sphere of self—there is present to me nothing but an act of my own mind—and yet there is before me a datum of consciousness, made up of parts which appear in a manner to lie side by side of one another. This seems to raise a difficulty, on Kant's theory of space, whichever way we may answer the question. If Representations do not occupy space, then we cannot accept the second member of Kant's proposition quoted above—namely: "In order that I may represent phenomena not merely as without of and near to each other, but also in separate places, the idea of space must already exist as a foundation." Kant's dictum here imports that, if I conceive two objects, no matter what, as being outside of one another and so in separate places, my doing so is the logical result of my having previously had the conception of space. But why? Evidently because we can only think of two objects as thus situated with respect to one another, by thinking them to be in

¹ *Ec gr.* by Reid, who positively denies that the idea of space is conveyed through any of the senses except sight and touch.

space. If, however, there are two objects—*e.g.* two portions of one image or representation, which can be conceived as outside of one another, lying as it were side by side, and which can yet be conceived as not occupying space, this argument falls to the ground. If it is possible to conceive two contiguous objects not occupying space, the notion of space is not necessarily involved in the conception of contiguity and distinct locality: if the former is not necessarily involved in the latter, the one is not the logical condition of the other. It could not in that case be said that “the representation of space *must* already exist as a foundation.”

On the other hand, if we answer the question in the opposite way, affirming that representations do occupy space, we seem plunged into fresh difficulties. Space, then, is something which is within myself as much as external to myself. Mere remembering or imagining—a purely mental operation—can occupy space. If so, one does not understand why the notion of space should lead the mind to distribute its data, not merely in some space, but in spaces external to the self. Here we seem to come into collision with the first member of Kant’s proposition. “In order that certain sensations may relate to something without me, that is, to something which occupies a different part of space from that in which I am the idea of space must already exist as a foundation.” The existence within the mind of a representation of space would not account for this externality—this tendency to place certain phenomena outside of the self—if there were space within the self. We cannot, however, in Kant’s opinion, as he says on the same page, “have an internal intuition of space.”

The difficulty suggested by this question may or may not have existed for Kant, despite his idealism; he does

not, however, appear to have noticed it ; but, for those who, with Hamilton, believe in the real duality of existence, in mind and matter as two distinct spheres, actually impinging on one another, it seems at first a somewhat formidable one. The fuller investigation of it must be reserved until we have consulted Hamilton.

“ Our notion of space,” says Hamilton, “ is not one which we derive exclusively from sense,—not one which is generalized only from experience ; for it is one of our necessary notions,—in fact, a fundamental condition of thought itself. The analysis of Kant, independently of all that has been done by other philosophers, has placed this truth beyond the possibility of doubt, to all those who understand the meaning and conditions of the problem . . . But, taking it for granted that the notion of space is native or *à priori*, and not adventitious or *à posteriori*, are we not at once thrown back into idealism ? For, if extension itself be only a necessary mental mode, how can we make it a quality of external objects, known to us by sense ; or how can we contrast the outer world, as the extended, with the inner, as the unextended world ? To this difficulty I see only one possible answer : it is this :—It cannot be denied that space, as a necessary notion, is native to the mind ; but does it follow that, because there is an *à priori* space, as a form of thought, we may not also have an empirical knowledge of extension, as an element of existence ? The former, indeed, may be only the condition through which the latter is possible. It is true that, if we did not possess the general and necessary notion of space anterior to, or as the condition of, experience, from experience we should never obtain more than a generalized and contingent notion of space. But there seems to me no reason to deny” [affirm ?] “ that, because we have the one, we may not also have the other. If this be admitted, the whole difficulty is solved ;

and we may designate by the name of *extension* our empirical knowledge of space, and reserve the term *space* for space considered as a form or fundamental law of thought." (Lect. Met. vol. i. pp. 113, 114).

This passage is followed by a few words which seem to imply an intention, on Hamilton's part, of following out the train of thought here suggested, in greater fulness, at some subsequent stage in his Lectures. It does not appear that that intention was ever carried out, which is much to be regretted, since Hamilton's meaning, as here expressed, seems to be somewhat vague. One may suspect that when he wrote this passage he had in his mind the notion of a distinction between space, as a form of thought, or as a thing believed in, and space as it is realized to the imagination. On this latter subject there is a singular passage in his Lectures. If we endeavour, he tells us, to imagine space, there are two attributes of which we cannot divest it, and these are, shape and colour. "This," he says very frankly, "may appear ridiculous at first statement." He proceeds, however, to establish his position by saying that, in the endeavour to imagine space, we must set out from a centre, and go on as long as we can carrying our sphere of imagined space outwards and outwards towards infinity. But, as this cannot be done at a single bound, but requires time, and time commensurate with the space to be thus run over by the mind, and as we have not infinite time at our disposal, we are obliged sooner or later to leave off. At the moment of leaving off, our imagined space, having been constructed by radiation from a centre, a process which we have no reason to push further on one side than another, must necessarily present the form of a sphere. Besides having this form, the image must likewise have some colour. We may take the palest and most neutral tint we please: it may be white, or grey, or coloured like

the sky, but colour of some kind, he tells us, it must have. He bids his hearers make the experiment for themselves, and they will find that he is correct." (Lectures, vol. ii. pp. 169-172).

Now, if this be so, as very likely it is, the conclusion would seem to be, not merely that space cannot be adequately imagined, *i.e.* cannot be imagined so extensive in regard for example to its infinity as it is thought to be,—but that it cannot be imagined at all. We can imagine a vast coloured sphere, *i.e.* a thing which has colour and which has limits. But when we have done so, how can we say that we have imagined space? In our image, two things only are presented to us—coloured matter, and its limits. We think space to have neither colour nor limits. It surely is not to imagine space, if we imagine something which, in every particular distinctly figured in that act, is different from space.

On the whole, then, it appears that Hamilton has been more successful in showing that Kant's account of the matter is incomplete, than in substituting a better one of his own.

From what has been said, incidentally, in criticising the opinions of previous writers, the view which it is here proposed to take as to the nature of space may to a great extent be anticipated. This view may be briefly summed up as follows:—

Space is not a thing perceived, of itself, by any sense: it is not a percept: it is not an internal presentation. It cannot be imagined. It must be, then, either a form of thought, a notion, or an object of belief; or several or all of these conjointly.

We have certain beliefs concerning space, which appear to be necessary and universal: if they are also simple, we

must hold them to be primary beliefs, and must on that account accept the things believed as true. These beliefs are, that space exists externally to the mind; that while our own intuitions, subjectively considered, do not occupy space, some of the objects of them do occupy space; that the objects are *in* space, not space in the objects; that the objects do not fill space, but, whereas they are limited, space itself is of infinite extent in the three directions of length, breadth, and solidity; and, finally, that space exists of necessity—in other words, that its non-existence is inconceivable.

That we have these beliefs, implies that we have the capacity for thinking, as it implies that we do in fact think, or form a notion of, space as existing in the manner here described.

Anterior to the notion, or conscious thought, of space as thus existing, there must have been, within our minds yet unknown to us, a law or tendency, in virtue of which we have been compelled to frame this conception of space. This latent tendency may be called a form of thought.

In virtue of this tendency, when objects are presented to the senses, we are constrained to distribute them and as it were set them side by side in space—*i.e.*, in places external to ourselves. The tendency which obliges us to do this must not, however, be considered as simply the result of an inability of the mind to grasp and arrange and as it were take a collective view of multiplex data without the aid of this form of space. The mind is not to be compared to a painter, who cannot make his picture unless there be given to him canvas to spread it on. For, the mind has no such incapacity; as may be learnt from the fact that it can bring up representations, or fancy-pictures, in which a multiplicity of dissimilar parts stand side by side as portions of one whole, without being supposed to

occupy space. Were not the "form" of space something more than a mere incapacity to have intuitions except in space, the existence of that form within our minds would not lead us to assign to objects apprehended by the senses a place, or places, external to the mind itself. Thus it appears that a belief—or, to speak more accurately, a latent tendency from which upon occasion there is evolved a belief—in the externality of sensible objects, underlies the "form" of space.

I could wish to believe that this explanation of the matter is that which was intended by Hamilton, in the passage cited above. It certainly appears to furnish a complete solution of the difficulty which he has there pointed out. But, as will be seen in a future chapter, this view cannot well be harmonized with Hamilton's favourite doctrine concerning "the unconditioned."

Thus it appears that the existence of the thing to which we give the name of Space is made known to us solely by a primary belief, emplant in the mind at its origin, latent in the first instance, but evolved upon occasion of its coming into contact, through perception, with external objects.

What has here been written concerning Space will serve likewise, with very slight modifications, for Time.

Time, according to Kant, is the pure form of internal, as space is of external, intuition. It is the place in which we arrange our acts or data of consciousness, subjectively considered. As thoughts and feelings are not supposed by us to occupy space, so neither do trees and rocks, objectively considered, occupy or fill up time. It is our mental act in perceiving these objects, not the objects themselves, to which we attach this limitation. In other words, time is not a form of external intuition, but of internal solely. It is to the self that which space is to the not-self.

There is a distinction between time and duration, analogous to that between space and extension. Such or such a definite duration may be regarded as a quality of any one of our mental acts, and separable from the remainder of it by abstraction ; just as, by a similar act, we may separate in thought the extension which belongs to this or that external object. But time, of which this duration is a portion, cannot be conceived as a quality of the thought : for we can imagine the thought or mental act which has occupied it to be non-existent or annihilated, but we cannot conceive the annihilation of any portion of time. Time, like space, is believed to have existence independent of its contents, an existence infinite and necessary.

Time, like space, is entirely unimaginable. "Five notes played on a flute," says Hume, "give us the impression and idea of time ; though time be not a sixth impression, which presents itself to the hearing or any other of the senses ; nor is it a sixth impression which the mind by reflexion finds in itself." (*Hum. Nat.*, i. 71.) If we try to imagine time, we find ourselves imagining a series of events which follow one another : we watch the beats of a pendulum, or count the tickings of a clock, or trace a long moving line, or recall the moving picture of our own past consciousness : in brief, we picture to ourselves objects which move, or through which we move : but that through which they move, though every such picturing implies its existence, cannot by itself be represented to our imagination, as there is no perception, and no internal presentation, to which it corresponds.

With regard to time, as with space, we must carefully distinguish these three things—time as a form of intuition, time as an object of thought, and time as an object of belief.

It appears convenient to limit the employment of the

term form, whether in dealing with forms of intuition or forms of thought, to the unconscious stage—to that stage in which its unconscious presence within the mind is secretly operative in moulding intuitions or thoughts after the preordained pattern; and thus to distinguish it from the notion and from the belief which are subsequently evolved, when the form has, by aid of the suggestions furnished by presentations, and brought together under likeness and difference by the aid of representations, entered into the consciousness, and become itself the object of the mind's reflex attention.

So long as we regard time as merely a form of intuition, we may very naturally hold ourselves entirely sceptical as to the objective existence of time, as a thing external to ourselves. The fact that we are only capable of receiving intuitions under the limitation of time, being a mere weakness or narrowness, or at any rate a mere condition, of our own mental action, proves nothing whatever as to existences external to ourselves. When once, however, we recognize time, not simply as a bare form, but as a form which by logical necessity involves a belief, operative although latent, then we are able to leave this scepticism behind us. We must extract the belief, and then, on the principles of our philosophy of primary beliefs, we may and must accept the thing believed as true.

Our beliefs concerning time are very nearly identical, *mutatis mutandis*, with those concerning space. We believe, in the first place, that time exists, as an external reality, independently of our apprehending it. This belief is perhaps not quite so obtrusive and unequivocal as the corresponding belief with reference to space; but it appears to be no less really entertained by us. We believe that changes are going on in the external world: that there had been a long process of organic growth and decay in

the materials of which this globe is composed, probably for centuries before it was inhabited by a rational creature: we believe that these changes occupied time: and this belief is distinct from, and independent of, any belief we may hold concerning a creative Intelligence: we believe, then, that time has an existence independent of our own or any other intelligence.

We believe, again, that events are in time, not time in events: that, while the events are or may be contingent, so that they may be thought as non-existent or as annihilated, the time which they had occupied would still exist: that there is a remainder of time before and after every apprehended event, and before and after the sum of all such events: in other words, that events or changes do not *fill* time. We likewise believe time to be infinite, not however in three directions, like space, but in two—backwards and forwards.

If we can believe these things concerning time, we can likewise think them. These beliefs being primary, we must hold the things believed to be true.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CONJUNCTION OF INTUITIONS.

OUR several intuitions, external or internal, are pieced together and interlaced, so to speak, by processes which are purely rational, that is to say, are unpicturable or unimaginable.

If we wish to investigate these processes and trace them to their more simple forms, we must make our way by working inwards, from the concrete and involved whole, towards the ingredients of which it is composed. For this purpose, we must first isolate from among the data of our consciousness that portion which we are to attribute to pure reason.

This term, “pure reason,” is here used in contradistinction to intuition, whether external or internal. Reason is that faculty which by its working evolves notions; as intuition is that which imbibes presentations and reproduces representations.

The isolating process in question is to be conducted in the following manner:—Let us take the sum total of our existing or potential knowledge, such as, without philosophizing as to its origin or validity, we in fact find it to be; from this mass let us subtract those portions which are directly given as intuitions; and the residuum will exhibit to us the workings of the pure reason. This residuum constitutes the concrete whole which we shall have to analyse into its elements.

Laborious as this process may be, it is not easy to see how any more compendious method can be safe ; since, it can hardly be too often repeated, we know nothing whatever concerning the powers of our own minds, except what we can gather inductively from observing what men have done ; nor, after the fullest induction, can we be certain that our knowledge is complete and exhaustive, except so far as we shall see that the phenomena repeat themselves or go in cycles, after a law which we shall thus find that we have perfectly formulated.

Perhaps, however, the process which we are undertaking may not prove to be so very laborious as it appears at first sight.

What portion of our knowledge is made up of intuitions, we ought now to be in a position pretty accurately to determine. External intuitions have a definite and strongly marked character which cannot be mistaken. Such intuitions are in every instance first given to, and then reproduced under the conditions of, some one or other of our bodily senses : they contain no matter of inference, comparison, or difference : each is single, isolated, homogeneous : each may indeed have contents, as occupying space, but we no sooner begin to say that one of them may be made up of parts which differ amongst themselves, than we find ourselves quitting intuition and entering upon comparison, which is an act of pure thought. In external intuition, we either are conscious, or remember to have been conscious when that which is now represented was first presented to us, of an immediate contact of self with non-self. Such is external intuition.

Internal intuition is less obtrusively distinguished from bare thought. Still, it is distinguished from it, as has been pointed out in the fourth chapter of the First Part, by the conjunction with it of a certain inexplicable sense of pre-

sent power or activity, carrying with it for the most part if not always a feeling pleasurable or painful.

Again, the thing from which we are thus to eliminate the intuitive element, viz., the sum total of man's knowledge, is a thing which, so far as regards its *formal* character,—and with this alone we have here to deal,—we find classified to our hand, in the sciences of grammar and logic. Logic, in that wide sense of the term which is given to it by Hamilton, Thomson, and Mill; regarded, not simply as the science of syllogistic reasoning, but as the science of the “formal laws of thought,” or as “the science of the operations of the understanding, which are subservient to the estimation of evidence;”¹ exhibits to us, in a compact form, the materials we are to analyse.

Intuition and inference, according to Mill, make up the sum total of human knowledge. If this be so,—which, however, I do not yet pretend to assert,—the science of inference, or logic, must exhibit to us precisely that of which we are in quest—the laws of the non-intuitive portion of human knowledge. We have only to examine what powers or faculties are brought into play, in the processes dealt with by logic, and to enumerate and classify them.

Logic, thus understood, has three parts: the science of terms or words, the science of judgments or propositions, and the science of syllogisms and of trains of reasoning inductive or deductive. Of these, it seems likely that for our purpose the first—the science of terms—will be found the most important. This branch of knowledge is common ground to logic and grammar.

Is it true or not—this, I think, is the first question we should ask ourselves—that for every word which exists

¹ Mill, *Logic*, vol. i. p. 11.

there exists a corresponding thought,—a thought of which the word is the symbol or mark?

If we can answer this question in the affirmative, we shall at once have placed ourselves in possession of a large body of facts from which we can draw conclusions as to the faculties of the mind: since words have been classified after a manner in some degree corresponding with the several modes of mental activity exhibited in the notions which they severally symbolize.

Of words which are names, whether of things or of thoughts, there seems no question but that they are marks or symbols of objects, so that every name has some object, really or potentially, *i.e.* conceivably, existing, which in a manner corresponds to it. Mr. Mill adopts the definition given by Hobbes—"A name is a word taken at pleasure to serve for a mark, which may raise in our mind a thought like to some thought we had before, and which, being pronounced to others, may be to them a sign of what thought the speaker had before in his mind." (Logic, vol. i. p. 23).

The doubt, if there be a doubt, can only refer to such words as are not names of objects; whether such as indicate mere relations, or qualities, or negations; or compound words that may be constructed by the accretion of two or more names or parts of names.

This doubt may be stated under the form of the following question:—Is thought limited by the necessities of language, and constrained to take the shape of the mould which language has provided for it, or is language itself simply the handmaid and instrument of thought? Is thought shaped by language, or language by thought?

An answer to this question may be found in a very slight consideration of the growth and development of language. This exhibits a gradual adaptation of it to the necessities of

thought. In the development of language, as may be observed in children, or traced by a comparison of the literature of any nation in successive stages of its development, objects are first noted, then actions, afterwards relations. These last, being remote from sense, and having no hold on the imagination, appear never to have been consciously apprehended, so as to suggest the need for names, until after some progress has been made in the formation of a language. Hence we find that, in most if not all languages, the words used to denote relations are verbs, or parts of verbs, which have been diverted from their original function, and used, originally through metaphors or analogies more or less forced, but eventually as perfectly distinct words, their primitive meaning being discarded and at last forgotten. Here, in the very structure of words, we see thought forcing for itself a way through the trammels of a language inadequate to give it expression, and for this purpose disintegrating its materials, in order, with them, to construct a more copious vocabulary in proportion to its growing wants. In this process we see thought the master of language, not its servant.

That language follows upon thought, instead of leading it, further appears from this,—that, in proportion as new objects come to be known, new names are presently coined for them.

In truth, it seems impossible to account for the coming into existence of any articulate word, were it not preceded by some need or desire for its employment; which can only be the pressure of some thought which men have been impelled in this manner to give utterance to.

We may conclude, then, that every single word, current in a language, proves the existence of a thought denoted by it. How the case may stand with composite phrases, or with trains of seeming reasoning which may be con-

structed by an artificial conjunction of words, we do not at present stay to consider.

Perhaps the question may be asked, what is a word? That which in one language is expressed by a single word, requires in another two or three. In such a case, is the thing expressed, which must be the same in both the languages, one thought or three? Some languages are, in the phrase of philologists, agglutinative, as the Greek and Latin; others, like our own, are not so, or are not so to the same extent. If *amavi* is the equivalent of "I have loved," is "*amavi*" three words, or the symbol of three thoughts, or are "I" and "have," in this connection, only fragments of one thought? This question may be readily answered, if we consider that, just as "I" and "have" may be annexed indifferently to "loved" or "hated" or any other verb, and at each remove produce by their combination one and the same modification of the verb, so their correlatives "*av*" and "*i*" may in like manner be annexed indifferently to the root "*am*" or any other verbal root of the same conjugation, and upon every such annexation affect the root in the self same manner: which fact of itself proves these terminations to have a meaning of their own, independent of the root; so that they are truly words, or symbols of so many distinct thoughts, not merely fragments of words; and, whether they are written and pronounced so as to run into the root, or with a space or pause between, is a mere typographical or phonetic arrangement, not in the least affecting the question of grammar. For grammatical purposes,—*i.e.* for what concerns the science of thought as exhibited in speech, these prefixes or suffixes are distinct words.

The science of words, as has been observed, is common ground to grammar and logic. "Logic," says Whately,

“is, as it were, the grammar of reasoning.” (Logic, Intr.) The truth is, logic and grammar together constitute one science,—the science of the mind’s operations in thinking; of which science grammar more especially deals with the first of the three great subdivisions, viz., terminology, while logic—in the ordinary sense of this term—is most appropriately occupied with the second or third, viz., the laws of judgments and of ratiocination. Logicians, however, feeling the imperfections of common systems of grammar, and conscious of the impossibility of building securely unless this foundation be first made steady for them, have found it necessary to encroach on the territory of the grammarian, in order to place terminology on a scientific basis. Thus it happens that the principles even of grammar may be best learnt from the logicians.

It may be convenient, however, in the first instance to run over the several “parts of speech,” as they are given to us in ordinary grammars, in order to enumerate the non-intuitive elements contained in each of them; which elements must afterwards be arranged in such a manner as that each may be examined adequately yet without repetition.

Let us begin with nouns substantive. These are subdivided into nouns singular, or proper names, and nouns general, or class-names.

From an intuition to the thing or thought denoted by a noun singular is a long journey, of which some of the principal posts or stations have been already designated. To constitute the object thus named, it has been necessary to give a certain unity to many intuitions, probably belonging to different senses, and connected together, partly by presentation, partly by representation through the memory. The means by which this is done have been set forth in the chapter on substance. The several intuitions which are to

be appropriated to the object, are connected with it through a belief, which appears to be engendered within us by a primary instinct; the belief, namely, that the intuitions which together make up the whole of our empirical knowledge concerning the object, are attributes which inhere in it as their substance. The attributes may be many and diverse, but the substance is one: attributes may undergo mutation from time to time, yet the substance preserves its identity. In this manner the manifold becomes or is constituted one by an act of thought.

Thus it appears that one of the pure forms of thought which underlies the construction of nouns singular, is the form of number. The object to which we give a name is distinguished as One. A certain unity is attached to it, by which it is differenced from all other objects.

We might no doubt go further in this analysis, but perhaps this is enough for the present. We may content ourselves with saying that the object of thought denoted by a noun singular contains intuitions *plus* substance *plus* number. In other words, when we have formed the notion of a single object—*e.g.* the man Socrates—we have conjoined several intuitions under the forms of substance and attribute and numerical unity.

To prevent misconception, the reader is here to be reminded that the object of a noun singular cannot be adequately represented by imagination, except in the very rare case of an object having for the mind only one attribute and that unvarying. A fixed star, to non-astronomers, may be considered as such an object: it is presented solely as an object of vision, and is seen always the same, *i.e.* as a very small drop of white light. Such an object may perhaps be represented precisely such as it is thought, and thought such as it is represented; I mean, of course, when its real magnitude is supposed actually unknown and un-

thought of. But an object which is apprehended by two or more senses, *e.g.* which can be both seen and touched, is thought of in a way which cannot be imagined; for, though we can imagine that which we see, and again can imagine that which we touch, yet we cannot imagine that union of the two in one and the same object which we apprehend in thought, when we say that the sight and the touch belong to one single thing. It is the same with an object apprehended by a single sense, but apprehended diversely at different times; such as the moon; for we can imagine it either as an orb or a crescent, but we cannot imagine that which we think, when we give the one name, moon, to both crescent and orb, thus declaring both to be one.¹

How or why it is that we thus give unity to the manifold, by gathering intuitions in parcels and attaching them to objects, we need not here stay to inquire. It is obvious that one reason why we do so is that, in fact, certain intuitions constantly exhibit themselves to us in company, and, by coming before us again and again always as neighbours, force upon us the conviction that there is some secret bond of union between them. This does not in the least militate against the assertion, that the thought or apprehension of this bond of union is a different thing from the mere intuitions themselves.

We come next to nouns general, or class-names. This branch of the subject has been to a great extent anticipated in the sixth chapter of the First Part. We have now simply to consider what forms of thought are contained in the fact that objects are thus distributed by the mind into classes.

In thinking of classes of objects, we build upon that which we have already done, in distributing our intuitions

¹ See Part I. chap. vi.

under objects: we think of individual objects and we also think of a bond of union which connects such objects together by bringing some of them into, and excluding others of them from, a particular class. That bond of union is not here, as before, the belonging to a common substance. On the contrary, we believe that the class has no substantial existence; there is no *thing* which answers to the class-word *man* or *dog*; the class is merely a mental receptacle, a shelf or pigeonhole, so to speak, into which, for convenience of arrangement, we stow away a certain portion of the furniture of our minds. We do not, however, classify objects at random, or arbitrarily; there is always a reason why this particular mode of classification is adopted in preference to others; there is a *vinculum*, or bond of union, betwixt the members of the same class. This *vinculum* is qualitative similarity; which with classes of objects occupies the place that is held by quantitative, *i.e.* substantial, identity in the case of individual objects. We classify objects together because their qualities or attributes are similar. This, rightly understood, is the universal principle of classification. It is not, indeed, always the case that we inquire into the similarity of *all* the attributes; perhaps it never is so; but we take certain attributes, or it may be some single attribute, which for the purpose in hand it is desirable to regard as the thing to be attended to, and we compare objects with reference to this attribute or these attributes alone. But, this being understood, it is always similarity of attribute which forms the basis of classification.

Thus we see that in the formation of class-names the mental faculty which is principally brought into play is the faculty of discerning likeness and difference, *i.e.* the faculty of comparison. This faculty is purely intelligential. When two intuitions are brought together by a mental act,

and are pronounced to be similar or dissimilar, the relation of similarity or dissimilarity is not a third intuition, but a mental apperception generically different from an intuition.

Nouns adjective, which come next in order, are the names of qualities. They may be sub-divided into simple and complex, the first being names of intuitions, and the second names of intuitions conjoined with notions. Such adjectives as denote colours, as red, blue, etc., or qualities of sounds, or tastes, as sweet, bitter, etc., or any other sensible impression, taken simply as it comes to us, are of the first class: to which also belong those which denote the simple feelings, as angry, sad, cheerful, etc.; while such words as virtuous, honest, and the like, cannot thus be traced to some single intuition, but are the result of a mixed process, thought having first manipulated the data of intuition.

It is certainly remarkable that, whereas intuitions, in and by themselves, are the first among the data of consciousness which find entrance into the mind, the attribution of them to objects being solely the result of a belief which operates we know not why, we yet find no language in which intuitions have substantive names of their own. The names of intuitions are invariably in their very structure pendulous, incapable, like ivy, of standing alone, and needing the support of substantives to which they may adhere. We see a patch of red, and at once conclude that there is some object of which redness is a quality: and this belief, which instantaneously converts the *thing* seen into a mere attribute of some thing not seen, was operative at the earliest time when men used articulate speech, for it has left its stamp in language,—the thing seen has never had a name as a thing.

Adjectives have been termed “abstract” names. “A concrete name,” says Mill, “is a name which stands for a

thing; an abstract name is a name which stands for an attribute of a thing." (Logic, p. 29). This distinction Mr Mill informs us he borrows from the schoolmen; and he with some bitterness laments the wanton "abuse of language," by which the term "abstract" has come to be confounded with "general." The blame of this misappropriation he charges upon the followers of Locke.

Now, assuming it to be true that there is some quality or combination of qualities in the mind in virtue of which it abstracts, *i.e.* draws apart, and sets up for separate contemplation, certain portions of that datum which is first presented to it as a whole, it may still fairly be questioned whether it is not true, as Kant has said, that the mind can only in this manner take to pieces that which the mind itself has previously put together, and whether its power of disintegration is not confined to the sutures and junctions which itself has previously made,—whether, in short, it can do more than unfasten that which it had previously fastened into one.¹

We first piece together intuitions by acts of thought, operating mostly in subserviency to the law or primary belief of substance: afterwards, analysing the results of our own synthesis, we separate asunder the parts of this artificial unity, dissevering the intuitions from one another, and also from the thread—the pure thought or thoughts—which had served to bind these together. To this process of untying we give the name of abstraction.

If this be so, as apparently it is, it is evidently inaccurate to limit the term "abstract name," or name of a thing obtained by abstraction alone, to adjectives. For, in the

¹ Where the understanding has not previously conjoined, it cannot dissect or analyse; because only as conjoined by it must that which is to be analysed have been given to our faculty of representation. (Pure Reason, book i. chap. ii. sect. 2. § 11).

first place, the intuitions preceded the analysis which gave the abstractions, as indeed they preceded the synthesis which made them up together as qualities of one substance. Besides which, our analysis leaves us with two distinct classes of residua,—the intuitions or things denoted by adjectives, and the acts of thought, or things denoted by those other parts of speech which we are now about to consider; and, of these two, one as much as the other is entitled to be called an abstract name, since it is the name of a thing determined by the process of abstraction.

We give one and the same name to a quality which is in many substances, *e.g.* blue, as a colour which may be discerned in the sky, the sea, many flowers, many objects of manufacture. Thus adjectives are class-names. The classification of qualities, under adjectives, appears to proceed in the same method, and under the same form of thought, as the classification of objects, under nouns general; *i.e.* likeness and unlikeness is the basis of it.

Adjectives are sometimes called singulars, sometimes universals. Blue, for example, as a quality of many objects, is thought of as one and the same in each. Hence, according to our point of view, we may either call blue singular, as being one throughout, or universal, as being throughout all blue objects. This oneness of the adjective appears to be regarded by logicians not simply as a qualitative oneness, *i.e.* perfect similarity, but as quantitative oneness or actual unity. Thus Mr. Mill says that when an attribute admits of no variety either of degree or kind, as for example milk-whiteness, then, “though it denote an attribute of many different objects, the attribute itself is always conceived as one, not many.” (*Logic*, i. 30).

This distinction will be better understood when we shall have shown, as it will presently be necessary to do, that “quantity,” including number, is a form of thought which

cannot be predicated of anything but substances. It would seem easy to negative the doctrine of Mill, cited above, by an appeal to men's ordinary belief, which certainly would justify our saying that the whiteness of one billiard ball, though it may be exactly similar to, is not the same thing as, the whiteness of another billiard ball ; or that the anger of to-day is not the same thing as the anger of yesterday, though both be precisely of the same degree and manifest themselves within me precisely in the same manner. But in so saying we should in truth be confounding two different things. Regarded in their relation to the substances in which they respectively inhere, the two whitenesses, the two angers, are two, not one ; but, regarded simply in themselves, apart from all relation to the substance, the whiteness is one, and the anger is one.

We come in the next place to verbs.

A verb, like an adjective, is an abstract term. It is deduced from intuitions by a process later in the order of thought than the formation of objects. When we have connected together several intuitions as belonging to one object, we next observe that this object undergoes changes ; in other words, the intuitions which belong to it shift their positions, either relatively to one another or relatively to other objects, but always in space or time. Thus change, and its relation to the object which is changed, come to be distinct objects of thought. Very likely this arises from our observing a certain community or similarity in the changes of many diverse objects. We abstract from the objects this one common property of mutation, and give a name to it ; beginning with such kinds of change as are most obvious and frequent, and going on gradually to the more recondite. Action and passion are the two leading divisions of change : things drive or are driven. There

can be no doubt that the changes of outward objects are first noted and first named, and afterwards the changes which take place within our own minds. Thus verbs are abstract class-names.

Here we may notice, what might indeed have been mentioned before, since it is common to all classification, that in thus forming classes there comes into operation the mental law or form of excluded middle,¹ sometimes expressed in the formula, "A thing either is or is not," but which perhaps may better be brought under the still more general formula of metaphysics, viz., that, to every object of thought there is annexed its opposite or contradictory. We cannot think of change without likewise thinking of its contradictory, viz., rest or persistency. So the giving names to phenomenal changes is accompanied by the giving names to the various states of repose or freedom from change.

A large class of verbs indicate, not merely phenomenal changes, but the causes of change, as powers or forces. The full significance of this fact in language will not appear until we shall have considered the meaning of the term causation, and in some measure discussed the controversies which bear upon it; matters which must be reserved for a future chapter. For the present, therefore, it may be well to confine our attention to those verbs which denote change or the absence of change, whether in objects external to ourselves, or in the states of our own minds. These may for convenience be termed Phenomenal Verbs, since they define merely the states of objects which are apparent to us, without ascending to the causal forces which may underlie those states but are manifested to us solely through their effects.

Change is or implies a relation. Objects undergo changes

¹ See Hamilton, Lectures, vol. iii. p. 83.

relatively to one another, or relatively to space, which is regarded as something fixed. The assertion "A moves," is unmeaning, unless we are thinking not only of A but also of something, be it only vacant space, through which, towards which, or from which, A is supposed to move. What, then, is relation? It is the bringing of two objects together under one act of thought, and viewing them, not as isolated, but as affecting or affected by one another. If it is relation in space which is in question, such relation supposes two things, the notion of space, and the notion of measure or comparative quantity of space. We must think of the two objects as nearer or less near to one another. We require, therefore, space *plus* quantity, in order to conceive such a relation. If it is a question of relation in time, we require, in order to apprehend the relation, the notion of time, *plus* the notion of a measure or quantity of time. Quantity, then, is a form of relation.

Every phenomenal verb denotes two things,—a change (or absence of change) and the connexion of that change with the object which changes. Hence logicians analyse every verb into an adjective and the copula: the change itself being a property of the object, *i.e.* an adjective, and the copula (*is*, or *is not*; or, more strictly, *is* only) expressing the connexion of the property with its object. The phrase "A goes," contains three distinct members: A, the object; "go," the kind of change which is the property of A, here denoted, and the copula, given under a slight disguise, which connects this property with this object.¹ Thus in the formation of a verb we see the partial disintegration of that synthesis of thought and intuition which takes place in the conception of individual actions. In other words, the verb is the quality of change or relation, ab-

¹ "The copula, as such, expresses merely the agreement or disagreement of two given terms." (Whately, *Logic*, chap. ii. § 2).

stracted from the objects it had been attached to in that synthesis, and viewed, not indeed as a *thing*, but as an object of thought, by itself.

With regard to pronouns—which, indeed, according to the etiquette of the grammarians, ought to have been suffered to take precedence of verbs—there is very little here to be said. In so far as they merely officiate as substitutes for nouns, their employment is a matter which belongs solely to the parsimony of words in discourse, and may be passed over as metaphysically unimportant. It is, however, to be noted that every pronoun is the result of a process of abstraction which is based solely on relations, and on that account this Part of Speech is an interesting one. In the case of demonstrative pronouns, every object is regarded as being, for the purpose of classification, alike, or indifferent; every thing, however dissimilar to another, shares with it the common title of this, or that, or yonder, simply according as it stands related, in regard to nearness or distance, with the person who is speaking. So of personal pronouns: there are but three possible relations of an object which in this connexion are recognized; either the object is myself, who am speaking, you, to whom I am speaking, or some he, she, it, or they, of whom I am speaking. However various may be the thou or you to whom I at different times may be addressing myself, yet in the relation here in question all are one; and so of the various objects of which I may from time to time be thinking or speaking.

Now if it be true that we can disintegrate by thought only such portions of a concept as our thought has previously combined, the very existence of pronouns demonstrates that bare relations, unimaginable as they confessedly and evidently are, are yet integral objects of thought.

Adverbs are said by grammarians to be words which qualify adjectives, *i.e.* which qualify qualities. Assuming this to be an adequate definition, we have to inquire how such qualifying takes place. There seem to be only the following ways in which adjectives can be qualified; we can either apply measures of *quantity* to the quality, and describe it as "much" or "little;" or measures of number, as "once" or "often;" or measures of space, as "near" or "far;" or measures of time, as "now" or "yesterday" or "hereafter;" or, finally, analogies derived from some other quality, as connected with the quality itself by some phrase indicating *likeness*, as the English termination "-ly," "truly," being a disguise of "true-like," and so of all other adverbs in this form. Thus we get adverbs of quality, quantity, number, space, and time.

If, now, we pause to consider what we have been doing, we observe that we have throughout been dealing with *relations*. We have brought into juxtaposition, every time we have used an adverb, two objects of thought, and have considered them conjointly, uniting both in one mental act, under the various reciprocal relations which may subsist between two objects, *viz.*, relations of quality, quantity, number, space, or time. Or, if there has been some complex relation, *e.g.* that of repetition, as given in the adverb "often," it may always be analysed into one or other of these primary forms.

I have purposely omitted a sixth relation, though a primary one, *viz.*, the relation of cause and effect: the whole question of causality being reserved for separate consideration in a future chapter. It is a question which involves too many controversies to be satisfactorily dealt with in any other manner.

Prepositions, like adverbs, have to do with relations. Hence we find that a table of prepositions may be arranged

almost in a parallel column with a table of adverbs; the classification, so far as regards the several kinds of relations, being the same for both.

By giving to a preposition a distinct name, we declare that we are capable of *thinking* the relation distinctly, *i.e.* apart from the objects which are related. To imagine this is impossible, but not so to think it; for we can give a name, *i.e.* annex a word, to nothing but to an object of thought. The relation of an object to the place it occupies is denoted by the preposition *at*. When we isolate the thought of this relation from its objects, *i.e.* when we coin the word *at*, we in this act declare our minds competent to grasp this thought, impalpable as it is to the imagination.

Of conjunctions, whether properly conjunctive or disjunctive, it is needless to say more than that they denote the relation which arises between the two objects of thought from their being brought into one by being united in a single act of thought.

Interjections may be passed over, as having nothing to do with the synthesis or analysis of intuition by thought. So far as they can be said to have any meaning at all, interjections may perhaps be defined as a species of primitive description or naming of simple moods of mind, or internal presentations separated from the objects to which they have attached themselves. In using an interjection, we give a sort of mimetic utterance to our simple feelings; and, if this be so, it is likely that interjections are the most primitive and rudimentary of all parts of speech.

Having thus gone through the parts of speech, it may be expedient, before entering upon the two other branches of logic, first to gather up the forms of thought which have been discovered in this analysis.

Of space and time, which are more properly forms of

intuition than of reason; and of substance, which, as a form, seems to hold a place intermediate between pure intuition and pure reason; enough has been said. Cause, and causal force, are reserved for future consideration. Those forms which remain may be enumerated as number, quantity, and likeness or unlikeness—which last includes the act of conjunction.

1. In order to make a comparison between objects of intuition or thought, each of the objects must first be isolated from all others, and regarded as a whole by itself. Each, then, is regarded simply as a unit: and, in respect of numerical unity, the two objects are alike. Number, then, including unity as well as plurality, is one *fundamentum relationis* between objects: and it is one which is given by the mind *a priori*.

2. Quantity is unity conjoined with the occupying of a definite portion either of space or time. The apprehension of quantity requires two conditions,—a pure intuition of space or time, and a power in the mind to isolate or measure off certain portions of this intuition, and also to compare the portions thus set apart one with another. No doubt, empirical measures of time or space are abundantly furnished to the mind from without; but the notion of making use of such measures could never have presented itself to the mind, had not the impulse to such mensuration first been given to it as an *a priori* faculty.

Quantities can only be compared together in so far as they are homogeneous. Spaces cannot be measured against durations, lines against surfaces, or surfaces against solids. In other words, there is not an absolute community of relation amongst quantities.

Comparison of quantity can only be made between objects which are finite in extension or duration. For, the comparison must be made with reference to some common

ground which embraces both the objects compared. It is true that we may compare together a supposed infinite line or cylinder of one inch in breadth with another two inches broad; but we can only compare them in respect of their breadth, *i.e.* in respect of that which is finite. We may say that one cylinder is twice as broad as the other; or that, if portions of both, equal in length, be taken, the one will be the double in quantity of the other; but we have no right to say that the one infinite cylinder is as a whole equal or unequal to the other; for we cannot predicate quantity of that which has no limit.

We are here, it is true, on very debateable ground. Mathematicians constantly speak of infinities as being equal; though apparently on no other ground than the impossibility of affirming that one is greater or less than another, which leaves their judgments *in equilibrio*. Dr. Whewell maintains that one infinite may be the double or the half of another. Sir W. Hamilton uses the perplexities which result from the application of arithmetic to the comparison of infinities, as an argument to establish that the infinite lies wholly beyond the range of human thought. That infinities can be thought, but cannot be measured against one another in relation to quantity, is a proposition to which all these conflicting authorities seem to be opposed.

Let it, however, be conceded that we can think objects infinite, and then the question arises, by what faculty are we to measure against one another the spaces, or durations, which such objects respectively occupy? In order to measure one space against another, at least we must be able to measure one of them. We must go round the borders of it, isolate it from other spaces by limits, take its dimensions as a whole, and so ascertain that it is thus much and no more. But such mensuration is only possible with respect to finite spaces; the infinite elude it.

To say that two infinites cannot be compared together in respect of quantity, is a very different thing from saying that they are wholly incogitable. This topic, however, is to be followed out more at large in a future chapter.

3. As regards the third form of pure reason,—the discernment of likeness and difference, or quality, it is hardly necessary in this place, after what has been already said, to do more than barely note its existence.

Apparently, every differential relation between two objects may be resolved at last into a sense of difference between two (or several pairs of) simple intuitions. Reasons have been already given for holding this sense or apprehension to be an act of pure intellect, generically different from the intuitions themselves. It is something added to the two intuitions: we know more, after we have noted the similarity or dissimilarity of two intuitions, than when we have merely directed our attention to the two intuitions consecutively but disconnectedly; yet this additional piece of knowledge is not a third intuition, but something of a different kind.

We come now to the second branch of the subject, viz., that division of logic which treats of judgments; and on this, fortunately, the purpose in hand permits me to be very brief.

Judgment, according to the logicians, is the bringing into a mental conjunction—which conjunction is itself indicated by the *copula*—of an object and of some property or quality of that object. This predicate (property or quality) may either be such as defines the object, *i.e.* severs it off from all other objects; or it may be something which the object possesses but which is possessed by other objects also. “Man is a reasonable animal,” is an example of the first kind; “man is an animal,” of the second. Minor dis-

tinctions, as that between *definitio* and *proprium*, I here pass over as immaterial to our purpose.

Judgments are said to differ in *quantity*, according as they are universal or particular. Singular judgments are for logical purposes reckoned as universals; the attribute being applied to the whole of the object.

They differ in *quality*, according as they are affirmative or negative.

In relation they are said to differ, according as they are categorical, hypothetical, or disjunctive. Categorical judgments are those in which the object is affirmed to belong or not to belong to the predicate. Hypothetical judgments,—*i.e.* those which are in reality and not in mere form hypothetical,—are those which infer a connection between the object and the predicate in the way of cause and effect. The consideration of this connection is reserved for a future chapter.¹ Disjunctive judgments are those which affirm that the object is either A or B.

Judgments are said by most logicians to differ in *modality*, according as they are possible, true, or necessary.

Of these four categories or forms of judgment, it is only the fourth, that of modality, which seems to add anything to the list of rational forms already put together. This is so, because it is the fourth alone which is peculiar to judgments. Possibility, truth, and necessity, considered subjectively, in their relation to ourselves, are, as has been seen, only so many kinds or degrees of belief. We hold a thing possible, when we believe that it may or may not be; true, when we believe that it is; necessary, when we believe

¹ For an explanation of this, the reader is referred to Thomson's *Laws of Thought*, § 73, in which are given all the formulæ of hypothetical judgments. If these are analysed, it will be found that, with the exception of the fifth formula, they all may readily be resolved into categorical judgments. The fifth brings in the notion of cause, and so far only is a judgment of a different kind.

that it must be. We are conscious of having these three grounds of belief, and this is perhaps the only explanation that can be given of them. If it be true that we have them, it follows that we must have a source of belief which transcends experience; for experience can only give "it is," never "it must be."

Those philosophers, accordingly, who insist upon reducing all knowledge to experience, find it convenient, and indeed absolutely requisite, to deny that the character of necessity can legitimately attach itself to any one of our beliefs. The axioms and demonstrations of mathematics are hence peculiarly obnoxious in the eyes of this school. The boldest and ablest among them, Mr. John Stuart Mill, finds it necessary to declare internecine war upon these provoking axioms. According to Mr. Mill, our belief in the necessity of mathematical truths is a mere illusion, resulting from the impossibility of divorcing in thought two conceptions which have been repeatedly presented to the mind in conjunction, and have never once been exhibited to it except in conjunction. There is in his book on *Logic* a remarkable dissertation on this thesis, which has not unnaturally provoked the ire of mathematicians. It is commenced in the following terms:—"This character of necessity, ascribed to the truths of mathematics, and even (with some reservations to be hereafter made) the peculiar certainty attributed to them, is an illusion." (*Logic*, book ii. chap. v. § 1). Mr. Mill then proceeds to give reasons for believing that, to whatever extent the axioms and theorems of pure geometry are even so much as true, they are so in virtue of having been accurately induced from experience; and consequently can have no greater certainty than that high probability which accumulated and uniform experience can endow them with,—all beyond this being a mere delusion of our minds,

consequent on our confounding the possibilities of existence with the limited range of our own mental faculties. Into this controversy I do not propose here to enter. Mr. Mill may be left in the hands of Dr. Whewell; and his paradox is only here noticed for the purpose of pointing out to what lengths the sensationalist philosophy is of necessity carried. In the chapter on Causation I shall have the opportunity of pointing out, likewise, a remarkable occasion on which Mr. Mill has abandoned his chosen position, and clings for support to this very notion of Necessity, which he here pronounces an illusion.

When we have framed terms, and combined them into judgments, it seems that all the faculties of our reason have been called into play; so that, although the combining of judgments into syllogisms, and so framing trains whether of deductive or inductive reasoning, is no doubt a perfectly distinct exercise of our understanding,—distinct, that is, in its object and method of procedure,—it does not appear that any additional forms of thought emerge during this exercise; and consequently this third section of Logic may here be passed over without notice.

All that remains is, to sum up the results which have been arrived at.

The categories of pure thought, as given in this chapter, are the following:—

1. Number.
2. A measure of quantity.
3. Likeness and difference.
4. Affirmation and negation.
5. Cause. (Reserved.)
6. Modality. Possible: true: necessary.

These do not very widely differ from Kant's categories,

and I do not venture to say that the difference is an improvement. Kant gives the following

“TABLE OF THE CATEGORIES.

1	2
<i>Of quantity.</i>	<i>Of quality.</i>
Unity.	Reality.
Plurality.	Negation.
Totality.	Limitation.

3

Of relation.

Inherence and subsistence (*substantia et accidens*).

Causality and dependence (cause and effect).

Community (reciprocity between agent and patient).

4

Of modality.

Possibility	impossibility.
Existence	non-existence.
Necessity	contingence.”

The differences between the categories as set forth in this chapter, and those enumerated by Kant, are the following: “Substance and attribute” is not on my list, but that is merely because I have already treated of this relation separately. “Unity and plurality” belong more properly to Number than to Quantity; and I cannot dispense with “a measure of quantity” as a form of thought distinct from that of number. Kant’s relation of “reciprocity” does not appear to me to be a simple form of thought, but the mere combination of two relations, one between A and B, and the other between B and A. I do not find that Kant brings in the relation of likeness and difference, which however I cannot but think simple and indispensable. “Limitation” I omit, as being nothing but a combination of difference and negation.

Let us now examine the categories of Aristotle. These, with the translation of them, I take from Mill.

<i>Οὐσία</i>	.....	Substantia.
<i>Ποσὸν</i>	.....	Quantitas.
<i>Ποιόν</i>	.....	Qualitas.
<i>Πρὸς τι</i>	.....	Relatio.
<i>Ποιεῖν</i>	.....	Actio.
<i>Πάσχειν</i>	.....	Passio.
<i>Ποῦ</i>	.....	Ubi.
<i>Πότε</i>	.....	Quando.
<i>Κεῖσθαι</i>	.....	Situs.
<i>Ἐχειν</i>	.....	Habitus.

These may be a little simplified. *Ubi*, *quando*, and *situs*, involve the intuitions of space and time, and the notion of a measure whether of number or quantity. *Relatio* is a generic term, including several of the other notions enumerated. *Substantia*, *quantitas*, and *qualitas* are retained on the modern lists. *Actio* and *passio* have been resolved by logicians into the copula and a quality or qualities, and thus fall under other categories. There remains only *habitus*, which, if I rightly understand it, is a mere combination of existence and continuous duration, and if so is certainly not a simple notion. On the whole, then, Aristotle's categories appear to add nothing to those of Kant. The coincidences are interesting, and it does not really detract from the value of them, if we must suppose, with Hamilton, that Aristotle was framing his list from an objective point of view, as a catalogue of possible existences, while Kant's point of view was purely subjective, aiming at a catalogue of possible forms of thought; since, in this matter, the possibilities of thought must constitute the measure of possible existence, not indeed as it is in itself, but as it is matter of human knowledge.

CHAPTER VII.

CAUSATION.

THERE now only remains that form of thought which was reserved for a separate consideration—viz., that which underlies men's beliefs relatively to Causation and Causes.

In order properly to treat this question, it would be necessary to determine—1st, what is in fact the belief of mankind on the subject of Cause; 2nd, whence is that belief derived; and 3rd, what is the objective validity of that belief—in other words, to what extent have we a right to consider that the thing believed is true.

Thoroughly to discuss these three questions, disposing of all the controversies which branch out of them, would be no doubt a very useful work, but one far beyond the limits of this Essay. I must be content very briefly to indicate conclusions merely.

That, amidst all the variety of men's opinions on subjects connected with causation, there is a certain *consensus*—a something which may fitly be termed “the belief of mankind”—appears to be established from the uniformity which has prevailed in all ages and countries with respect to certain ethical and certain rational principles which necessarily involve theories concerning cause. For example, the principle that men are morally blameable or praiseworthy in respect of such actions as are voluntary, and not in respect of such as are enforced, is one that all systems of jurisprudence, all religions, and the common sense of mankind

in all times and places, appear to have recognized as it were instinctively. This principle, however, is only intelligible on the supposition that man is in some sense the cause, or moving force, of his own acts in so far as they are acts of volition, while, with regard to all other acts, he is not an originator but at most a bare transmitter of force.

As a matter of fact, that which men in general believe concerning causes, may, I think, be fairly stated as follows :

Amongst objects supposed to be without intelligent volition, whenever a change takes place, it is believed that that change must necessarily have had a cause. In saying this, men mean, not merely that some other fact or state of things must have preceded it in order of time, but that there must have been some force at work, which has produced the change. The thing which has been the cause of the change, has done so, we think, by exerting some force upon the objects changed. This term, force, cannot be defined, any more than we can define the sensation red or green ; it is a simple presentation, insusceptible of analysis into elements : but every one understands the term force as clearly as the term green.¹

Now, if this force is traced to some object which is itself without intelligent volition, we are constrained, it seems, to believe that the force does not reside in the object, but is in someway *behind* it ; it operates through it, not from within ; we consequently regard the action of this second or causative object as being itself the effect of some cause. And so, however long be the chain of mechanical or lifeless causes, we find ourselves perpetually seeking for something which is behind them.

This tendency of our minds is expressed by the so-called

¹ "What convinces myself that I have an idea of power (force) is, that I am conscious that I know what I mean by this word ; and, while I have this consciousness, I disdain equally to hear arguments for or against my having such an idea." (Reid, *Act. Powers*, Essay i. chap. ii. p. 518).

axiom, "Everything which begins to exist must have a cause." This axiom, however, does not accurately express what men in fact believe.

For, when men have to deal with acts of volition, it does not appear that, apart from theories, they are driven by any impulse from within to seek for causes of such acts. Volition is ordinarily supposed to be a force in itself: it seems to be the fact that each man has a direct consciousness that his own volitions are in some sense free. The very conception of force, which sets us on searching for causes, is probably first suggested to, or awakened in, every man by his direct consciousness of having, or of being, a force in himself. It is a sort of doing violence to his own instinctive belief, when he tries to persuade himself that his own acts of will are mere passive effects of remoter causes. He can only train himself into this belief by a somewhat severe logical process; the contrivance for which can only be the application—the misapplication, I believe—of the above-mentioned axiom to volitions.¹

In fact, not only does the belief in his own absolute passivity not come naturally to a man, but he is soon dis-

¹ "Is there any truth in the assertion, so often put forth as an undeniable discovery of modern science, that 'cause and effect are indissolubly chained together, and that one follows the other in inevitable succession?' There is just that amount of half-truth which makes error dangerous; and there is no more. Experience is of two kinds, and philosophy is of two kinds; that of the world of matter, and that of the world of mind,—that of physical succession, and that of moral action. In the material world, if it be true that the researches of science *tend* towards (though who can say that they will ever reach?) the establishment of a system of fixed and orderly recurrence; in the mental world we are no less confronted, at every instant, by the presence of contingency and free will. In the one we are conscious of a chain of phenomenal effects; in the other of *self*, as an acting and originating cause. Nay, the very conception of the immutability of the law of cause and effect is not so much derived from the positive evidence of the former as from the negative evidence of the latter. We believe the succession to be necessary, because nothing but mind can be conceived as interfering with the successions of matter; and, where mind is excluded, we are unable to imagine contingency." (Mansel, Bampton Lectures, p. 124).

couraged from the task of forcing it upon himself, by two or three terrible difficulties to which it leads him.

For, if active force does not reside in matter nor in mind, where does it reside? If nowhere, how have we come to frame the notion of it? If we are to assume that the notion is a mere illusion, which comes from no experience—for, on the hypothesis, there is no such thing in existence, and it consequently never can have been experienced—then it must have been engendered within us from the constitution of our own minds: and, if so, it is a primary belief which is illusory; in which case, as has been seen, all our primary beliefs may be illusory, and so we plunge into absolute scepticism. Active force must then exist somewhere. Say, then, that it exists in God, and in Him only. We are not, however, out of our difficulty then. For, if it be so, it must either exist in one of those properties of the Divine nature which is the same as, or like, a property of man's nature, or in some property which is different from every property of man's nature. If the latter, it must be a property of which we can have no conception whatever. With such a property our minds could not come into contact. From such a property, therefore, the notion of force could by no possibility have been suggested to our minds: for we are supposing it not to have been manifested to us, either by outward objects—since in these we find no force to reside—nor by anything within our own selves. Thus there is no way of presentation, external or internal, by which force can, on this hypothesis, have been brought to our minds. We do have, however, the notion of force. This hypothesis, then, that there is no force in the will, is untenable.

If the axiom, "everything which begins to exist must have a cause," is a universal truth, applicable to the movements of our own wills because to all movements, it must

be similarly applicable to every movement of the divine will. God, as well as man, is thus made subject to a certain uncomprehended necessity. The existence of this necessity must again have had a cause; and so *ad infinitum*.

Finally, if our volitions are necessitated, either we are not blameable for any act of ours, and so there is no such thing as right and wrong; or else that universal and apparently primary belief, above spoken of, that moral blame is co-extensive with the power to act or abstain from acting, is an illusion. In either case we are driven to scepticism, for we have one primary belief irreconcilable with another.

On the whole, then, it appears that the actual belief of man concerning causes is this:—The search for causes is a search for active force. Where volition is not, we find no force: we believe, however, that force underlies all change. Where volition is, we recognize the existence of force, and force in a manner self-originating.

This belief cannot have come to us through external experience; for we do not recognize force, in this sense, as existing in any objects except in ourselves, or volitions similar to our own; besides which, external experience can exhibit to us no more than successions, from which we have no right to infer the existence of a force to cause them. The belief comes to us through an internal presentation—viz., the consciousness of force in our own acts of volition. But the individual presentation suggests and awakens the latent belief in cause as universal: it does not lead to it in the way of induction. As in the case of substance, so with cause; we believe this or that act of volition to be the result of a force within ourselves, because we believe every act of volition to be so. When once we have consciously put forth a force, we know that we are

continually putting forth force. It is not an induction, gathering force from accumulation of individual instances,¹ but it is a primary belief, which only needs one single instance, not for proving, but for awakening us to a consciousness of, the universal law.

This, then, in brief, appears to be the form, or primary belief, concerning cause: all change is the result of force, and force resides solely in volition.

If this is a primary belief, we have, for the reasons already given, a right to conclude that the thing believed is true.

It may be well to append some few observations, in confirmation of what has been said, and by way of answer to objections which might be brought forward.

1st. Until we come to intelligence, we seem, in all our seeking for causes, to have discovered only successions of dead and passive motions: we believe that in these there is no increase, and also no diminution of force. Consequently, whilst we are dealing with material causes and effects, we believe, and apparently cannot but believe, that no increase or diminution of the aggregate of existence follows upon the transmutation of causes into effects; that the effects are neither more nor less than the causes put together in a new combination. What we have learnt, from the tracing of physical effects to their physical causes, is merely, that there is a continual flux and change in the objects presented to our observation. In the words of Hamilton, "there is conceived an absolute tautology between the effect and its causes: we think the causes to contain all that is contained in the effect; the effect

¹ If it were, the causal judgment would only gradually acquire its full force in proportion as instances had been accumulated. "But do we find that the causal judgment is weaker in the young, stronger in the old? There is no difference. In either case there is no less and more; the necessity in both is absolute." (Hamilton, *Lect. ii.*, p. 394.)

to contain nothing which was not contained in the causes.”¹

2nd. It is maintained by writers of the sensationalist school that, when we say one thing is the cause of another, we in fact mean no more than that the former invariably precedes the latter. This doctrine, were it tenable, would overthrow several of the positions above laid down. Is it, then, tenable?

It must be admitted that outward observation gives us nothing more, concerning causes, than uniformity of succession. On the theory, therefore, that such observation is man's sole avenue to knowledge, we seem compelled to conclude, not only that man does not, but that he cannot, have any notion of cause which transcends the notion of uniformity of succession. But, for those who deny the theory *in limine*, this argument is worthless; and we have to deal with the question of fact, whether it can be established by proof, or can by proof be refuted, that men's notion of cause is nothing more than a notion of uniform succession.

Now, in dealing with this question, we should consider what it is which a sensationalist means by the term “uniformity.” It must, on his own principles, be such a uniformity as can be gathered from experience. But experience can teach us nothing more than that datum A has been followed by datum B a great many times; whence it may be thought likely that datum A will always be followed by datum B. This string of observations, coupled with this inference, represents the whole of what we mean when we say that A is the cause of B.

If this be so, the question arises, what is the minimum number of observations of sequence which will warrant the

¹ Lect. Metaph., vol. ii., p. 377. See this lecture for illustrations of the law here stated.

drawing of the inference here spoken of? The probability that A is the cause of B must be graduated according to the frequency of the observed successions. Each single additional observation must add some shade of cogency to the conclusion. In that case, the first observation must have had some—no matter how infinitesimal—weight of argument in this direction; unless we can suppose that there is something in the hundred-and-first observation which there was not in the first. At every time, then, of our observing that one thing follows another, we have some slight reason for thinking that the former was the cause of the latter; and at each time when a similar succession is repeated, some little is added to the force of the inference.

This, however, appears to be contradicted by the facts. There are unquestionably some successions which, however frequently repeated, never suggest to our minds the notion of cause and effect. Perhaps we may have heard “God save the Queen” a thousand times, and never once have heard the first bar unless followed by the second: yet no one in his senses ever fancied that the first bar was the cause of the second. Reid’s difficulty seems conclusive: day always follows night, and night day, yet one is never thought to be the cause of the other.¹

Children appear to look for causes, and to act on the supposition that every change which affects them must have some cause or other, long before they can have accumulated such a store of remembered sequences as would furnish them with the means of judging whether or no certain facts “uniformly” succeed one another.

It is idle, however, to multiply arguments on this head. There is one short, decisive objection to the sensationalist

¹ Mr. Mill has attempted to dispose of this difficulty, but certainly cannot be said to have succeeded. His reasoning is fully discussed towards the end of this chapter.

doctrine concerning causes. Our notion of cause carries with it the notion of necessity. We do not, indeed, think it necessary that this or that cause should produce this or that effect; but, amongst physical changes, we think it necessary that each shall have had some cause. But necessity transcends experience, and cannot have been given by it. Our notion of cause contains, then, something which cannot have been given to us by experience alone.

3rd. Suppose it conceded that our notion of cause contains or carries with it the notion of force, is it true, it may be asked, that our notion of force is restricted to the force of intelligent volition? Are there not other forces, which we recognize as existing in external nature as well as in ourselves: such, for example, as vital force, or nervous energy, in our own bodies; or as gravitation, the centrifugal and centripetal forces, magnetism, or electricity, in bodies external to ourselves? These, and no doubt others like them, are usually thought of by us, not as being the mere passive media or transmitters of force, but as being forces in themselves, after a fashion more or less analogous to the force of volition. It is true that we probably regard these forces as having been *given* to matter, as being created, not self-originating; but we hold precisely the same opinion with regard to human volition, if we regard ourselves as created beings. Are we justified, then, in drawing this sharp distinction between the earth's force of gravitation and man's force of volition—in saying that the latter is, and the former is not, an originator of activity?

To this it may be answered: the essential difference between the forces here spoken of, and the force of volition, appears to reside in the quality of freedom, peculiar to the latter. We seem to be so constituted that, whenever we can do so, we refer back the real origin of every change

that takes place to something behind it, which we term its cause; and this process does not stop, and we seem unable to stop it, until we reach something which defies us to go further. When we have said that bodies gravitate towards the earth because of what we call the earth's force of attraction, we feel that it is impossible to arrest our inquisitiveness in the search for causes at that point: we go on to say, There must be a cause for this so-called force; either the earth possesses a living force, a vitality, of its own, in some mysterious manner analogous to the force of volition in ourselves; or else that which we call its force of attraction is merely a name for some wholly unknown force, which is not in the earth, but operates through and as it were from behind it. Thus we find ourselves under a certain necessity, either of divesting the earth of force, or of investing it with a quasi-human vitality; our choice lying between theism and pantheism. It would be precisely the same with human actions, if we could get rid of the belief in their freedom. If, by reasoning on the force of habits and motives in curtailing human liberty, we could persuade ourselves that all our own actions were actually necessitated, we should inevitably cease to consider human beings as possessing active force in themselves. Men would be automatons; there would be left but one single force pervading the universe, viz., the will which keeps in motion, or which long ago first set in motion, this clockwork which is now mechanically running on.

Thus it appears that that form of thought which we may call the law of cause cannot be arrested in its action until it has reached an act of free will. At that point, however, there arises a barrier which it cannot overpass. Granted freedom of the will, as a truth, and it is impossible that an act of will shall have had causes; or, at any rate, what suffices for the present argument, it is impossible, not merely

that we should comprehend how it could have had, but that we should really believe that as a matter of fact it has had, causes.¹ For, as has been seen, in the causes of a change are contained the *whole* of the effect: to trace an effect to its causes is simply to resolve it into its elements—adding nothing, taking away nothing; but in any such resolution the element of liberty disappears.²

4th. Another objection to the view here put forward may be stated as follows:—

Let it be granted that we have no right so to extend that law of causation which governs matter so as to bring under it acts of volition: that we are not warranted in arguing *a priori* that, because all changes must have causes, therefore volitions must have causes. Still, as a matter of fact, provable by inductive reasoning, can it not be established that every act of volition is, we need not say necessarily, but invariably, determined by the balance of motive? And, supposing the fact proved, may we not say that, even if motives only govern our will in the gentle way of persuasion, yet a persuasive power which *invariably* succeeds in persuading, is, in its results at least, closely akin to a power which controls?

It would be great want of candour not to acknowledge that the difficulty here suggested is a very serious one. We can hardly deny that, as reasonable beings, our actions are governed by motives: and there seems no reason for supposing that we should, at any given moment, elect to follow that which at that moment appears to us the weaker of two opposing motives. At each moment, therefore—on

¹ It is of course not here intended that such an act cannot have had *motives*. The distinction between a cause and a motive is dealt with a little lower down.

² The incompatibility of the two notions, that acts of volition are free, and that they are the effects of causes, has been so fully demonstrated in the celebrated work of Jonathan Edwards, that it is unnecessary to say more on the subject in this place. Mr. Morell, with all his ability, has in vain attempted to pierce the joints in Edwards's reasoning.

this view—our will must be under the control of a motive ; which motive, whether it be the result of external circumstances, or of our own previous habits of mind, is at any rate a force external to the particular act of will which is then in question. On this view, our wills, though seeming free, would not really be so.

On the other hand, as it would be equally hard to believe that the freedom of which we are conscious is illusory, we seem almost driven to question the truth of the opinion, that acts do always follow the stronger motive. Let us consider on what evidence that assertion rests.

Have we, in fact, any reliable means of testing the comparative strength of conflicting motives, unless we say that that must be the stronger which overcomes the other by influencing our conduct? If not, then we shall evidently be reasoning in a circle, when, having by this test determined which of two motives is the stronger, we use the fact of our acting in obedience to it as a proof that we obey the stronger motive. It may be remarked that this way of reasoning only becomes fallacious when the *a priori* argument—that we *must* obey the stronger, because acts must have causes—is excluded : as it is in the present argument.

If, then, there is some other way of knowing that all our acts of volition are in fact determined by the stronger motive, what is that way?

We cannot say that we know it by direct consciousness. This could only be the case, if a man could say that there were no acts of his will in which he was not conscious of obeying the stronger motive. This, however, is not so. Many of our acts of volition take place without our being conscious of any motive whatever. We act, sometimes, from what we call impulse, or caprice, or self will : of which influences we can give no further account than that they seem to be, not properly motives, *i.e.* not incentives to

action which operate upon the will from without it, but rather ways in which the will determines itself. It would be a misnomer to call wilfulness a motive of action; it is rather an ebullition of the will itself,—an energy, abnormal perhaps, which it puts forth, not an influence external to and operating upon it.

If, then, there are some acts of will which have no motive, or none of which we are conscious, or which have a motive, the strength of which we do not consciously measure against that of the conflicting motives, it cannot be said that we know, by direct consciousness, that every one of our volitions is determined by the stronger motive.

Can we say that an act of will which is determined by the stronger motive is the most perfect form—the type—of which these irregular acts of wilfulness should be regarded as marred or imperfect fragments? Apparently not. For, although the former kind may be acts of the more perfect mind, they are not the most perfect acts of will. On the contrary, the peculiar nature of the will is most distinctly seen in those acts which most strongly exhibit its freedom—*i.e.* those in which it appears most to be emancipated from the control of such external forces as motives.

If, then, the invariable supremacy of motives over will is neither demonstrable *a priori* nor deducible from experience, the fact itself may not unreasonably be questioned: and, at any rate, it cannot be considered so clear a matter of certainty as to justify our inferring from it that the sense of freedom, of which we are directly conscious, is illusory.

5th. In conclusion, two objections to the doctrine of free will, drawn from theology, may be briefly noticed.

It is sometimes urged that a real freedom of the human will is incompatible with the belief that man is a created

being. We are made such and such : our wills and our motives have been given to us : we are absolutely nothing, except as we have been formed by some external power. Everything that is in us comes from without : there can, then, be in us no real self-originating force.

To this it must be answered that what we call creation, as applied to the human soul, is something the nature of which is absolutely incomprehensible to us. It would be a kind of setting limits to Omnipotence, were we to pronounce it impossible to create beings which should be really free. Certainly we cannot comprehend the process : that which we call the creation of a soul may be some mysterious emanation, entirely dissimilar to the construction of a machine.

The second objection is that man's freedom appears incompatible with God's foreknowledge.

This difficulty must be answered in a similar manner. The true character of God's knowledge of that which passes on this globe is a thing so absolutely transcending our conception, that we cannot even guess, apart from revelation, whether or no it is subject to those limits of time which hamper ours. Whether past and future are words that have any meaning, when applied to His vision, we cannot conjecture. This being so, it would be no less vain than presumptuous to draw inferences from our supposed knowledge of His powers as to their being incompatible with what we know concerning our own.

I have thought it convenient to postpone to the end of this chapter the consideration of the manner in which Mr. J. S. Mill, in his book on Logic, has dealt with the subject of Causation. If I venture to assert that, on this subject, the language of this usually very clear and accurate writer is remarkably vague and obscure, and the reasonings

of this usually very powerful reasoner are singularly unsatisfactory, it is only because nothing could well furnish a stronger illustration, than do these blemishes, of the extreme difficulty which besets any attempt to account for the phenomena of causality on the principles of the sensationalist school.

Mr. Mill's leading principle, like that of his predecessors, is that what we term the relation of cause and effect is merely uniformity of sequence between phenomena: the belief in a power exerted by the one over the other is an opinion which, without absolutely negating, he sets aside as being irrelevant to mundane philosophy. For all the purposes of inductive science, he tells us, an adequate conception of the relation of cause and effect is obtained, in such a conception as can be derived from experience; and what that is, he explains in the following terms:—"The law of causation, the recognition of which is the main pillar of inductive science, is but the familiar truth, that invariability of succession is found by observation to obtain between every fact in nature and some other fact which has preceded it; independently of all consideration respecting the ultimate mode of production of phenomena, and of every other question regarding the nature of 'Things in themselves.'" (Logic, i. 359.)

What we have to ascertain, if possible, is, the precise meaning attached by Mr. Mill himself to the modifying clause in this definition—"independently of," etc.; and this we learn a few pages further on in the same volume.

"When we define," says Mr. Mill, "the cause of anything (in the only sense in which the present enquiry has any concern with causes) to be 'the antecedent which it invariably follows,' we do not use this phrase as exactly synonymous with 'the antecedent which it invariably *has* followed in our past experience.' Such a mode of con-

ceiving causation would be liable to the objection very plausibly urged by Reid—namely, that according to this doctrine night must be the cause of day, and day of night; since these phenomena have invariably succeeded one another from the beginning of the world. But it is necessary to our using the word cause, that we should believe, not only that the antecedent always *has* been followed by the consequent, but that, as long as the present constitution of things endures, it always will be so. And this would not be true of day and night.” (pp. 370–371.)

By the expression “the present constitution of things,” Mr. Mill in a note explains himself to mean “the ultimate laws of nature (whatever they may be) as distinguished from the derivative laws and their collocations. The diurnal revolution of the earth, for example, is not a part of the constitution of things, because nothing can be so called which might possibly be terminated or altered by natural causes.” (p. 371, n.) And, in conformity with this view, Mr. Mill proceeds to argue that because it is conceivable as possible that the earth’s rotation might be suspended, in which case it would be for us always day, or always night, “*therefore* it is that we do not call night the cause, nor even a condition, of day.” “This,” he continues, “is what writers mean when they say that the notion of cause involves the idea of necessity. If there be any meaning which confessedly belongs to the term necessity, it is *unconditionalness*. That which is necessary, that which *must* be, means that which will be, whatever suppositions we may make in regard to all other things. The succession of day and night evidently is not necessary in this sense. It is conditional on the occurrence of other antecedents. That which will be followed by a given consequent when, and only when, some third circumstance also exists, is not the cause, even though no case should have

ever occurred in which the phenomenon took place without it." . . . "Invariable sequence, therefore, is not synonymous with causation, unless the sequence, besides being invariable, is unconditional. There are sequences, as uniform in past experience as any others whatever, which yet we do not regard as cases of causation, but as conjunctions in some sort accidental." (pp. 371, 372).

The question we have to consider is, whether the above "modifying clause," and the concessions with which it is explained and developed, do not amount to an entire abandonment of the sensationalist ground,—of that which may be termed the leading principle of Mr. Mill's philosophy, viz., that all knowledge is made up of experience and induction from experience. Viewed in this light, as a virtual, though perhaps unconscious, surrender of the cause of sensationalism by its most distinguished supporter, the critical examination of these sentences becomes a matter of extreme interest.

"The only notion of a cause which the theory of induction requires," says Mr. Mill, "is such a notion as can be gained from experience." We have to consider whether Mr. Mill's notion of a cause, as set forth in these extracts, is such a notion or not.

Mere uniformity of sequence, is not, by itself, it appears, adequate to the production of this notion of a cause. "There are sequences, as uniform in past experience as any other whatever, which yet we do not regard as cases of causation." What is it, then, which must be added to uniformity of sequence, in order to make up our notion of a cause? This additional ingredient, whatever it be, must be a something derivable from experience. Mr. Mill informs us that this ingredient is a belief that this uniformity of sequence which we have observed in time past, will (so long as the present constitution of things endures) always continue. This important belief, Mr. Mill in his note explains, contains within

it the element of unconditionalness or necessity. When we believe that a thing will always continue, we do so, according to Mr. Mill, because we think it *must* continue. Accordingly, a little later on, he substitutes the term "unconditionalness" for the belief in future uniformity of sequence; and we learn that "invariable sequence is not synonymous with causation, unless the sequence, besides being invariable, is unconditional."

"Unconditionalness," then, in Mr. Mill's sense of that word, is a something derivable from experience.

Does Mr. Mill mean by his term unconditionalness, a something which involves the notion of necessity, or not? It is easy to understand the reluctance with which this eminent writer would make the admission that it does: and it may be admitted that the sentences above quoted do not contain an explicit acknowledgment, in so many words, to that effect. Yet, if they be not intended to convey that impression, what can they mean? Either unconditionalness must involve necessity, or not. Let us make the latter supposition, and on this basis examine Mr. Mill's argument. A sequence which is both invariable and unconditional is the sequence of cause and effect. A sequence may be unconditional without being necessary. Because it is conceivable as possible that the sequence of night and day might be suspended, therefore we do not consider this to be a sequence of cause and effect. But here at once we come to a flaw in our logic. "Because it is conceivable as possible?" That, of which the contrary is conceivable as possible, is not necessary. But to say that a sequence is not a sequence of cause and effect, merely because it is not a *necessary* sequence, is inconsistent with what was said before: we should be able to say that it is not an *unconditional* sequence; and a sequence may, it is assumed, be unconditional without being necessary. This seems to

show, either that Mr. Mill is illogical (which is absurd) or that he cannot hold that a sequence may be unconditional without being necessary. Indeed his own language appears to place this latter position beyond doubt. "That which is necessary, that which *must* be, means that which will be, whatever suppositions we may make in regard to all other things." This definition of necessity would serve equally well, apparently, to define Mr. Mill's meaning of the word unconditionality. Unconditionality is at any rate included in necessity. "If there be any meaning which confessedly belongs to the term necessity, it is unconditionality." And, if the sentence above quoted be, as it seems to be, intended as a definition of the term necessity, there is nothing more in it than unconditionality. The two terms, then, as used by Mr. Mill, are identical.

This being so, Mr. Mill appears to have arrived at the conclusion that the notion of cause involves two ingredients: uniformity of sequence, and necessity; and that both of these are gained from experience.

The word "ought," according to Bentham, should only be used once, viz., to affirm that the word itself "ought" to be banished from the vocabulary. A reader of Mr. Mill would naturally expect this writer to be not less chary in his use of the word "necessary;" since he has expended vast pains and ingenuity to convince us that the thing denoted by that word is in all cases an illusion and no more. Even with regard to those objects of thought which by the common consent of mankind in all ages have been regarded as the most strongly stamped with the character of necessity,—even with regard to the truths of pure mathematics,—Mr. Mill pronounces that the necessity we attribute to them is a mere illusory opinion, resulting from an incapacity of the mind to separate in thought two notions or representations, which have always come before it con-

jointly, and have never once in fact been given to it separately.

What makes the matter perhaps still more singular is, that these two dicta,—that causation involves necessity, and that necessity is mere illusion,—are both to be found in the same volume, and have not a very large number of pages interposed to keep the peace between them. There is no occasion to travel outside of the first volume of Mill's *Logic* for our references.

Having stated (*Logic*, p. 242) that all reasoning is, or is reducible to, induction from particulars, and (p. 240) that general propositions are mere formulæ for assisting in this process, Mr. Mill proceeds, in a subsequent chapter, to reply to the objection urged by Dr. Whewell, that some conceptions, *e.g.* the axioms of pure mathematics, are held by us to be not only true, but necessary. "Experience," Dr. Whewell had said, "cannot offer the smallest ground of the *necessity* of a proposition. She can observe and record what has happened; but she cannot find, in any case, or in any accumulation of cases, any reason for what *must* happen. To have a proposition by experience, and to see it to be necessarily true, are two altogether different processes of thought."

Now let us see in what manner Mr. Mill answers this difficulty; because, in the manner of his doing so, we shall scarcely fail to discover what it is that he understands by the expression that a belief is necessary.

He answers it, not by denying that there is a so-called necessity about the axioms, but by maintaining that the "necessity" is a mere illusory opinion, resulting from an incapacity, under which the human mind labours, of separating in thought combinations which have always been conjoined in experience. We call a thing necessary, he says, when we are unable to conceive its being otherwise;

and we are unable to conceive its being otherwise, if, after frequent experience, we have always found the thing thus and not otherwise. "When we have often seen and thought of two things together," he says, "and have never in any one instance either seen or thought of them separately, there is, by the primary law of association, an increasing difficulty, which may in the end become insuperable, of conceiving the two things apart." (p. 268.) "What wonder if the acquired incapacity should be mistaken for a natural incapacity?" (p. 270.) And Mr. Mill is convinced that nothing more is requisite, than a moderate familiarity with the elementary laws of association, "to dispel the *illusion* which ascribes a peculiar necessity to our earliest inductions from experience." (pp. 272, 273)

According to Mr. Mill, then, we are so constituted by our nature, that when, of two given things or events, one has very frequently been accompanied or followed by another, and this companionship has never once been broken in upon by an exception, we are constrained to fall into the illusory opinion, that an exception is impossible—that the sequence is necessary: and this is an illusion or weakness which grows upon us, being strengthened by each repetition of the observed sequence, until at length it becomes too strong to be shaken off; and then we are inflexibly settled in the melancholy delusion. It is in this way that we come to the erroneous convictions, that two and two are necessarily (and not merely very often) four; that the same thing cannot in the same sense both be and not be; that equals added to equals are (not merely for the most part, but inevitably) equal; and the like.

Unfortunately, on this view of the matter, Mr. Mill's whole argument about causation breaks down suddenly. For, if this be so, what right can we possibly have to maintain that the earth's diurnal revolution round the sun,

or the succession of night and day, is one of those things which might possibly have been otherwise? The thing has constantly been observed to be thus, and no living man's experience and no record—unless Mr. Mill would rest his argument upon the solitary recorded instance in the Old Testament—has furnished one instance to the contrary. How is it, then, that Mr. Mill has in his own person escaped the influence of that “acquired incapacity” to which he subjects the human species? In spite of an accumulation of uniform experience which one would think must, on Mr. Mill's principles, be adequate for the purpose, it has not happened to him to have become inflexibly settled in the delusion that that which has frequently and invariably taken place must necessarily take place. This certainly appears somewhat strange.

There is, then, it appears, an inconsistency between Mr. Mill's doctrine about necessity when it is applied to causation and when it is applied to the axioms of mathematics or to any other subject. Invariableness of sequence, however long continued, is not of itself enough to engender the notion of cause and effect; there must likewise enter in the ingredient of necessity. This very necessity, however, when examined, proves only to be invariableness of sequence under another name; for whatsoever in it is more than such invariableness is only an illusory opinion, resulting from an “acquired incapacity” of our minds. Even this illusory opinion does not in any degree serve to remove Reid's old difficulty concerning day and night. Thus the elaborate and ingeniously constructed argument falls to pieces.

This little criticism of Mr. Mill's theory of causation cannot better be dismissed than in Mr. Mill's own words, altering merely the application:—“If what is said by” Mr. Mill “in support of an opinion which he has made

the foundation of a systematic work, can be shown not to be conclusive, enough will have been done, without going further to seek stronger arguments and a more powerful adversary."

CHAPTER VIII.

HAMILTON'S "PHILOSOPHY OF THE
UNCONDITIONED."

HAVING now gone through the several Forms of Thought, it only remains, in order to bring this Part to a close, that we examine Hamilton's celebrated Theory of the Unconditioned; which, if adopted, would lead us to conclusions very much at variance with those here come to.

Hamilton's theory of the Unconditioned, having been made the basis of Mr. Mansel's metaphysical or theological system, has been used for purposes, and taken to support conclusions, which I dare say would not a little have startled its author. With these, however, we have at present nothing to do. We are to examine Hamilton's doctrine, as a mere abstract question of metaphysics.

Hamilton's doctrine may briefly be summed up as follows:—

The powers of the human mind are strictly limited to the finite and the relative. The only things which we can positively "construe to our minds" are such as have limits and have relations. That mental process which we miscall thinking of the infinite is, properly, the mere negation of thought: it is the withdrawing of our minds from those conditions under which alone thought is possible. The finite and the relative Hamilton classes together under the term "conditioned;" the infinite and the absolute together make up the "unconditioned." The conditioned is cogitable; the unconditioned is incogitable.

From this impotency of our minds—for such he expressly terms it¹—Hamilton explains the origin of our notion of cause. It being out of our power to form the notion of absolute beginning, we are, whenever anything appears to begin, constrained to suppose that every one of its ingredients must have previously existed in some other combination, and thus we get to its causes.

Notwithstanding this inability to think the infinite or absolute, we are yet, according to Hamilton, from the constitution of our logical faculties, "inspired with a belief in the existence of something unconditioned beyond the sphere of all reprehensible reality." (Discussions, p. 15). The sphere of faith is thus more extensive than the sphere of reason.

The reasoning by which these conclusions are supported may be arranged under the following heads:—

1. It is urged that the infinite and the absolute cannot be represented by the imagination; and consequently, for reasons which must be examined, cannot be apprehended in thought.

2. It is urged that whenever an attempt to reason about the infinite,—*e.g.* in the very simple process of comparing the quantities of two infinities—we fall into contradictions and absurdities; which fact appears to demonstrate, either that our mental faculties are not trustworthy, or else that we are using them out of their legitimate sphere; of which suppositions the latter is the more reasonable.

3. All matter of thought must first be given to us, either from without, through experience, or from within, by self-consciousness. But there is nothing infinite, either in what we experience, or in the fabric of our own natures. Thus there is no source from whence a notion of the infinite can be furnished to our minds.

¹ Lectures, Metaph. ii. 397.

Let us take these arguments in order.

1st. The infinite is unimaginable, and consequently incogitable.

"We cannot positively represent, or realise, or construe to the mind,"—says Hamilton—" (as here understanding and imagination coincide) an infinite whole; for this could only be done by the infinite synthesis in thought of finite wholes, which would itself require an infinite time for its accomplishment. Nor, for the same reason, can we follow out in thought an infinite divisibility of parts. The result is the same, whether we apply the process to limitation in *space*, in *time*, or in *degree*. The unconditional negation, and the unconditional affirmation, of limitation,—in other words, the infinite and the absolute, properly so called, are thus absolutely inconceivable to us." (Discussions, p. 13).

"Is the *absolute* conceivable of time? Can we conceive time as unconditionally limited? We can easily represent to ourselves time under any relative commencement and termination; but we are conscious to ourselves of nothing more clearly than that it would be equally possible to think without thought as to construe to the mind an absolute commencement, or an absolute termination, of time; that is, a beginning and an end, beyond which, time is conceived as non-existent. Goad imagination to the utmost, it still shrinks paralysed within the bounds of time; and time survives as the condition of the thought itself in which we annihilate the universe:

‘ Sur les mondes détruits le Temps dort immobile.’

But if the absolute be inconceivable of this form, is the *infinite* more comprehensible? Can we imagine time as unconditionally unlimited? We cannot conceive the infinite regress of time; for such a notion could only be realized by the infinite addition in thought of finite times, and such an addition would itself require an eternity for

its accomplishment. If we dream of effecting this, we only deceive ourselves by substituting the indefinite for the infinite, than which no two notions can be more opposed." (ib. pp. 29, 30).

Let us examine, first, the concluding paragraph. "We cannot conceive an infinite regress of time." That is, in other words, we cannot *think* such a regress. Why? Because such a notion could only be "realized" by the process of measuring time backwards to infinity. By this term "realized," however, can only here be meant realized to the imagination. We know what we mean by the term "a million:" we must therefore have some thought which corresponds to the term: yet, in order thus to realize the notion a million, we ought, it seems, to count a million. Must we do this every time we wish to make use of the notion? Every man's experience satisfies him that he has a more compendious way of thinking a million. But perhaps this is because he has once counted a million, and can remember the process? Is it the fact, however, that we can think, or have a distinct notion of, no greater number than the greatest we have ever counted? It is true that our power of imagination, as applied to numbers, is very limited: but we appear to have another more abstract way of grasping numbers by pure thought. Why may it not be the same with regard to infinities?

Infinity, as applied to duration, does not appear to be thought by any process of counting, or otherwise accumulating, finite durations, and then leaving off from exhaustion or indolence. The thought appears to be derived from that form of the conjunction of thoughts already spoken of as the basis of the logical form or axiom of contradiction. Of every object of thought, without exception, we are under the necessity of thinking that it either is or is not. The object and its negation or contradictory are both implicitly

presented to our minds in the same act of thought. We do not, indeed, necessarily think of both as true, or existing, or even as possibly existing; but the thought of one carries with it the thought, as a bare concept, of the other. We cannot have the notion of limitation without in the same act having its correlative, the notion of non-limitation.

It must be conceded, then, that, as our notion of a limit is positive, our notion of its opposite, infinity, is a negative notion. A negative notion is, as has been seen, absolutely unpicturable to the imagination. Reasons have already been given, however, for holding that a negative notion is a true thought, not the negation of thinking.

On this point the reasoning of Hamilton appears to be singularly inconclusive.

"Correlatives," he writes, "certainly suggest each other; but correlatives may, or may not, be equally real and positive. In thought, contradictories necessarily imply each other, for the knowledge of contradictories is one. But the reality of one contradictory, so far from guaranteeing the reality of the other, is nothing else than its negation. Thus every positive notion (the concept of a thing by what it is), suggests a negative notion (the concept of a thing by what it is not); and the highest positive notion, the notion of the conceivable, is not without its corresponding negative in the notion of the inconceivable. But though these mutually suggest each other, the positive alone is real; the negative is only an abstraction of the other, and, in the highest generality, even an abstraction of thought itself." (Discuss. p. 28.)

In this passage there surely is a confounding of reality of existence with reality as an object of thought. If a positive notion suggests a corresponding negative notion, both are notions: or what is the meaning of the words used by Hamilton himself? It is true that if we think

the positive to be that which truly belongs to some particular object—*i.e.* to be real and true—we cannot at the same instant think that its negative also belongs in the same sense to the same object; and so far it is true that the reality of the one contradictory is the negation of the other. If Hamilton means to go further, and to say that the act of thinking the one is incompatible with the faculty to think the other, what can he mean by saying that the one notion necessarily suggests the other? It is almost in the same breath saying that a thing necessarily does that which it is impossible for it to do.

To return to the passage under review. The same answer may be made to what Hamilton argues concerning the inconceivability of an "infinite whole" and an "infinite divisibility of parts." If these notions are to be presented in a pictorial form to the imagination, it may be conceded that the thing is impossible, for want of an infinite time in which to carry out the process on Hamilton's method. But if we can think of, *e.g.* space as a whole, and as infinite, it is not easy to see why these two notions should not be combined, and then we should have, not an image indeed, but the notion, of an infinite whole.

We cannot, it is certainly true, conceive time as unconditionally limited: for as has already been seen, time is believed by us to be infinite. Precisely because we do think time as infinite and as necessarily infinite, we cannot hold the contradictory belief that time is finite. But this inability results, apparently, from no incapacity on our part to conceive such a thing as an absolute beginning. It is not that absolute commencement is in itself inconceivable, but that it cannot be believed in with reference to time. For, we do conceive absolute beginning, whenever we think of a volition as actually free. There is, in such an act, a something—as has already been seen—

which cannot be resolved into causes—cannot be traced further back. This unknown something, then, which is the most essential peculiarity in an act of will, and gives it its character of a force in itself, is a species of absolute beginning. It is like a new creation, of which we are conscious within ourselves when we put forth the energy of a volition. If this be so, it is not necessary for the present purpose to affirm that the doctrine of free will is true: it is enough that it may be conceived of as possibly true. The fact of its existing as a bare hypothesis, or as an object of thought in however questionable a shape, is enough to prove that it is possible for the human mind to frame the notion of an absolute commencement.

But there is one portion of Hamilton's argument which has not yet been dealt with—namely the parenthesis "as here understanding and imagination coincide." It is pretty clear, from other passages in Sir W. Hamilton's writings, some of which have been quoted in the earlier part of this volume, that this philosopher is not of the opinion of those who altogether limit the thinkable to the imaginable. He suggests the borrowing from Germany of a distinct set of terms, to mark the distinction between those processes of thought which deal with imaginable objects, and those which do not. What peculiarity is there, then, about "the infinite" or "the absolute," which should oblige us to hold that *here* understanding and imagination coincide?

To clear up this matter, Hamilton appends a note to his parenthesis, which is as follows:—

"The understanding, thought proper, notion, concept, etc., may coincide or not with imagination, representation proper, image, etc. The two faculties do not coincide in a general notion: for we cannot represent man or horse in an actual image, without individualising the universal, and

thus contradiction emerges. But in the individual, say Socrates or Bucephalus, they do coincide; for I see no valid ground why we should not *think*, in the strict sense of the word, or *conceive*, the individuals which we *represent*. In like manner, there is no mutual contradiction between the image and the concept of the infinite or the absolute, if these be otherwise possible; for there is not necessarily involved the incompatibility of the one act of cognition with the other." (Discussions, p. 13, n.)

This passage deserves careful study; not merely from the weight which must be attached to every dictum of this profound thinker, but more especially because it is the only passage, so far as I am aware, throughout his works, in which he explicitly gives a reason for holding that, because the infinite is unimaginable, therefore it is incogitable.

For the purpose of Hamilton's main argument, it evidently is requisite that he should here establish, between the two operations of imagining the infinite and thinking the infinite, a coincidence of such a nature that, if the one could be proved impossible, it must follow that the other would be impossible likewise. No coinciding, short of this, would suffice. For, the scope of his argument is as follows: he proves that we cannot *imagine* the infinite, and he then infers that we cannot *think* the infinite, because the two operations, supposing both possible, would necessarily coincide. It is evident that there is a flaw in the argument, unless the coinciding be such as above described: for, if we were to grant that the two operations, supposing both possible, must necessarily coincide in some other sense—*e.g.* as both covering the same ground, so as not to be separately apprehended—we might grant every one of Hamilton's premisses, and still be as far off from his conclusion as when we began. His argument would be no stronger than if one were to reason that because men

who see with both eyes see objects single—the vision of one eye coinciding with that of the other—therefore a man who loses the sight of his right eye cannot possibly see at all.

As regards some objects of thought, viz., general notions, Hamilton recognizes a mode of mental apprehension which is different from imagining. It must be so, he reasons, because it is certain that we somehow have such notions—and no less certain that we cannot have them in the way of imagining, because, if we attempt to make an image of such a notion, "contradiction emerges." This seems very evident. Is it, however, equally certain that the converse holds good? Have we the right to infer that, when we have a notion of such a kind as that contradiction would not emerge were we to represent it in an image, therefore the notion is the image and nothing else? Once grant that there is a faculty of thinking, distinct from the faculty of imagining, and there seems no reason for supposing that the former faculty is strictly limited in its operation to those objects of cognition which cannot be grasped by the latter. It may be that, while each has its own special field, out of reach of the other, there is also a large extent of ground common to both. If I can think that which I cannot imagine, it is at least by no means impossible that I can think that which I can imagine. If any reason whatever can be suggested why the existence of such a power should be deemed even improbable, I can see no other but the law of parsimony. It being acknowledged unphilosophical to postulate two faculties for doing work which can efficiently be done by one of them, we ought not, it may be argued, to suppose ourselves capable of apprehending by thought that which we can equally well apprehend by imagination. But the law of parsimony cannot be appealed to on Hamilton's side in the present question.

For, the basis of his argument being that the infinite cannot be imagined, it is of course out of his power to argue that the law of parsimony forbids us to suppose that it can be thought, on the ground that there would be two faculties to do the same work. If he admits that there is a faculty complementary to that of imagining, which comes into play when we are dealing with one class of objects of thought which cannot be adequately imagined, or which cannot be imagined without the emerging of contradiction—viz., general notions—why should he pronounce it impossible that this same faculty should have the power of dealing with another class of objects which, he holds, cannot be imagined at all—viz., infinities?

On the whole, then, it appears that the first of the three arguments above enumerated—viz., that the infinite is incogitable, because unimaginable, is not tenable¹. Let us see how it will fare with the second.

2nd. Whenever we attempt to reason about infinities, we fall into absurdities and contradictions; whence we may properly infer that we are out of our depth.

For example: if we think of time as infinite, and yet as being broken at a point—*e.g.*, at this moment—we shall have the triple contradiction, of an infinite concluded, of

¹ If it were true that what cannot be imagined cannot be thought, we should be driven to adopt Hume's singular paradoxes concerning space. Space, argues Hume, must be composed of ultimate particles, each one of which, so far from being infinitely divisible, cannot be divided below the point at which our senses can apprehend it. As there is a *minimum visibile* of space, so there is a *minimum cogitabile*. For, all our objects of thought consist, says Hume, of impressions and ideas—*i.e.* presentations and representations. Ideas are intuitive reproductions of impressions. Where there has not first been a corresponding impression there can be no idea. We have then no idea of any part of space so small that it cannot be apprehended through the senses; otherwise we should have an idea not preceded by a corresponding impression. But space, for our reason, exists as it is perceived or thought; and that which can neither be perceived or thought by the human mind, must by the human mind be considered as non-existent. Consequently, a mathematical point is inconceivable and a nonentity. (Hum. Nat. i. 65-75.)

an infinite commencing, and of two infinities not exclusive of each other (Disc. p. 30, Mansel's Bamp. Lect. 301-3). If the two portions, time past and time future, are both infinite, they must be equal to each other; each must also be equal to the whole; for infinities are equal; consequently, a half is equal to the whole. Mr. Mansel, pushing arithmetic into theology, as some less orthodox speculators have done with less eulogy, suggests the following difficulty:—When God created the universe, was the sum total of existence greater than before? Impossible, for then you would have a greater than infinity. The universe therefore = zero.

All which difficulties melt away in a moment, if we once recognize the principle laid down in a previous chapter—viz., that quantity, and therefore those rules of arithmetic which have to do with the comparison of quantities, have, and can have, no relation to infinity. The arguments in support of this principle have already been set forth; and it is apparent at a glance, that all the so-called reasoning about infinities, of which specimens are given in the preceding paragraph, involves this illegitimate process of subjecting the infinite to measures of quantity. It is not because the infinite is incogitable, but because it is immeasurable, that this way of dealing with it lands us in absurdities.

3rd. The third argument, that our minds, being finite, are inadequate to apprehend the infinite, is one that can hardly be said to have been explicitly stated by Hamilton, though something of the kind is here and there hinted at. But the argument is one that may not unnaturally suggest itself to some minds, and it may therefore not be amiss to take notice of it.

It is not very easy to understand in what sense our minds are said to be "finite." If it is because the

objects of our thought are exclusively finite objects, the assertion, it is evident, is a mere begging of the question. Of the essence of our mind we know nothing, except so far as we have observed its workings and can thence infer its powers. To enable us, then, to pronounce that the mind of man is limited, it would be necessary for us to have reached those limits, and taken a complete measure of it, as it were, from the outside. Whether or no such an operation would require an intelligence superior to that of man,—as that which measures must be greater than that which is measured,—it is enough here to say that such a complete and final mensuration of the faculties of the human mind, as should authorize us to pronounce that it is bounded on every side by a limit, has not yet been made. We are not therefore at present warranted in affirming that the human mind is finite.

Supposing this fact were established, however, it would still remain to be proved that the finite cannot apprehend the infinite. The proposition seems to be exactly analogous to the supposed axiom, long in vogue, and to which are to be traced so many of the wanderings of metaphysics—that mind cannot directly apprehend, or come in contact with, matter. However little we may comprehend how it should be, it does appear to be the fact that the mind can apprehend, or come into contact with, objects which are of a nature different from its own; the non-material can apprehend the material; what right, then, have we to assume that the finite cannot apprehend the infinite?

In thinking of the infinite, when it is regarded as a negative thought, the matter is given to us from within ourselves; being contained, as has been already seen, in that law of "excluded middle," which constrains us

to supplement every thought with the thought of its contradictory.

Thus it appears that none of the three arguments by which Hamilton's theory is defended is proof against objection. Because the infinite cannot be imagined, it does not follow that it cannot be thought. Because we are driven into absurdities so soon as we attempt to measure the quantities of infinities, it follows, indeed, that the infinite is immeasurable, but not that it is incogitable. That finite minds can comprehend only objects that are finite, is a pure assumption.

In conclusion, let us consider how Hamilton's theory of the conditioned explains the phenomena of causality.

It is out of our power, according to Hamilton, to grasp in thought the notion of an absolute beginning. But relative or phenomenal beginnings we constantly witness in common experience. How are these two things to be reconciled? By the supposition that the thing which appears to us to be now beginning to exist, did in reality exist previously in a different combination, *i.e.*, every one of its ingredients existing, and that which is new being merely the piecing together of its parts in this determinate manner. "But to say that a thing previously existed under different forms, is only in other words to say, that a thing had causes." (See Lectures, vol. ii. pp. 407-8.)¹

Now it is obvious that this account of the matter reduces our notion of causation to one of mere sequence. That which this notion really contains over and above the notion

¹ "As all distinct ideas are separable from one another, and as the ideas of cause and effect are evidently distinct, 'twill be easy for us to conceive any object to be non-existent this moment, and existent the next, without conjoining to it the distinct idea of a cause or productive principle. The separation, therefore, of the idea of a cause from that of a beginning of existence is plainly possible for the imagination." (Hume, *Hum. Nat.* i. 143.)

of sequence—viz., as has been already seen, a notion of active power—is, on Hamilton's theory, altogether ignored and left out of sight. A notion of antecedence, even of necessary antecedence, in the cause, such as that which he suggests, entirely fails to account for, as indeed it does not contain, the notion of power. The insufficiency of such a view of causation to account for the phenomena of our consciousness on this subject, has already been pretty fully pointed out. That this should have escaped Sir W. Hamilton is the more surprising, when it is considered that he quotes with approbation, and seems to adopt as the expression of his own opinion, a passage in which Professor Wilson brings forward, and strongly urges by way of answer to Brown, the incompleteness of any theory of causation which shall have excluded the notion of active power. (Lect., vol. ii. pp. 383, 384.)

Such are some of the objections which stand in the way of an acceptance of Hamilton's theory of the unconditioned.

It is perhaps hardly necessary to add, in conclusion, that nothing which has here been said is intended to imply that the infinite can be *comprehended* by human intelligence: nor yet, that we can comprehend the mode in which the attributes of infinity can exist in a person; or that we can *a priori* construct a system according to which absolute Being must work. In the preceding pages has been exhibited a philosophy of much less lofty pretensions than those of Schelling or Hegel. We have been content to acknowledge that, even of our own natures, the essence is a mystery to ourselves: and it would certainly be a ludicrous degree of arrogance were men in one breath to pronounce themselves unable to fathom the nature of man, and capable of fathoming that of his Maker. With much of what Mr. Mansel has written on this subject I entirely concur. I believe, however—and for the reasons which

have been given in this chapter—that Mr. Mansel, who on this part of his subject appeared to follow Sir W. Hamilton, has, like the latter, gone too far in affirming that the infinite is, not simply incomprehensible, but incogitable. In truth, if I mistake not, this writer has not always carefully distinguished these two propositions from one another ; nor has he once attempted to explain how it is possible for a man to *believe* that which he cannot cognize, or grasp as a bare object of thought. The sceptical conclusions which necessarily flow from this excessive limitation of the powers of thought make me feel, I must confess, a somewhat unphilosophical hope that it may have been successfully combated in the foregoing pages.

CONCLUSION.

PRIMARY BELIEFS IN RELATION TO THEOLOGY.

CHAPTER I.

THE PROVINCE OF REVEALED RELIGION.

UP to this point we have been dealing exclusively with the Pure, as distinguished from the Applied, Philosophy of Primary Beliefs. Supposing the leading doctrines of this philosophy to be accepted, if only provisionally as probably true, the next thing to be done would be, to test the value of them, by applying them to some definite province of scientific inquiry, such as the science of ethics or politics, and examining how far these principles were found practically useful, as aiding our researches in these sciences. I can at present only hope that such a work may at some future time be undertaken by some one who may have the leisure and the capacity for it.

All that I can venture to propose to myself in this direction is to set down some few observations on the application of this philosophy to certain questions in theology, upon which it seems to have a direct bearing. And I shall begin with a notice of the manner in which the doctrine of primary beliefs bears upon the great question,—what is the true province of revealed religion?

We, living in a Christian community, have been taught to believe that certain truths as to matters of fact, certain

rules of conduct, and certain promises with reference to the future destination of the soul, have been given to the human race, through supernatural means, by a direct revelation from God, recorded in certain writings, and in some manner intrusted to the keeping of an organization called a church.

Let us suppose the case of a man who shall have so far emancipated himself from the impressions derived from early education as to stand apart, and to contemplate the Christian religion as it were from the outside, as a mere spectator. He shall have said to himself: I am at this moment a heathen—an unbeliever; let me see whether this religion can convert me. There was a time when all the world was in this condition; and the world, or at any rate the most highly cultivated portion of it, passed from this condition to Christianity. This religion, if it be such as it professes to be, must have the power, not merely, by the force of habit or similar motives, to retain those who have never questioned its authority, but also to draw back to itself those who in good faith have done so. Let me see, therefore, in what manner it will draw back me.

Further, let us suppose our inquirer to be penetrated with a conviction of the truth of that body of opinions to which has here been given the name of the philosophy of primary beliefs. He is persuaded that there are implanted within his nature certain germs, which the experience of life necessarily develops into beliefs; and that the authority of the beliefs thus developed is so far paramount to all other authority as that he cannot, without falling into the most absolute scepticism, accept as true anything which distinctly contradicts them.

To a man who is in this frame of mind the question concerning the Christian religion will naturally take the following shape:—Are my primary beliefs adequate in them-

selves to satisfy the needs of my spiritual nature ; or do they lead me to recognize a need for some revelation, external to myself, and which shall in a manner supplement and supply the deficiencies of them ? In the former case, I may be well content still to stand aloof from revealed religion ; for I may say that I do not want it. I may no doubt be even in that case willing to receive it, from motives of convenience, or out of accommodation to weaker natures, or because I think the grosser incentives of a religion which attracts the populace may be conducive to the order or well-being of a State, or from some other motives of convenience analogous to these ; but it will not, in any high sense, be a religion for my own use. In the latter case,—if I recognize a deficiency or need such as that here spoken of,—I shall have to inquire further ; it may then be possible for me really to become a Christian.

The first question is, therefore, whether the philosophy of primary beliefs does or does not lead a man to recognize the *need* of a revelation.

There is, as I believe, a line of thought—probably not the only one—which ought to lead a man who shall consider the question from this point of view to give an affirmative answer to it. This line of argument may be summed up as follows :—1. It is reasonable to believe that the development of the human soul is a process which transcends the conditions of a lifetime ; 2, that development consists in the realization of an ideal type or pattern ; 3, the realization of that ideal type is enjoined upon men by an instinct of duty ; 4, such realization is impossible, without a certain discarding or cancellation of a man's past life, in a manner corresponding to that which is known to the Christian religion under the term regeneration ; 5, this regeneration is a something which transcends reason in

such a manner as to be unattainable except by means of a supernatural revelation.

On each of these heads it will be necessary to say a few words.

It may be well to begin with some considerations which seem to show that the potential self, I do not say of men of genius, or persons of exceptional powers whether of intellect or poetical or artistic sensibility, but of any ordinary person, is of far too large proportions to be completely evolved in one lifetime, or by the education afforded in any single capacity as a member of the human society. I do not know that the establishing of this position is really essential for the support of the reasoning which is to follow; further than as that extension of the sphere of the soul's possible self-development, which is given in the prospect of an existence prolonged after death, brings with it an immeasurably increased breadth, importance, and solemnity to our view of this great work of inner self-development.

Reasons have already been given for holding the opinion that what is called the formation of a man's character is a process, not merely or chiefly of accretion or accumulation from without, but principally of development; that is to say, of bringing forth into the light of consciousness that which potentially but latently existed from the outset. Behind or beneath the conscious character, there is a force dormant until aroused by some appropriate stimulus, but which, when thus aroused, reveals its existence by putting forth manifestations which may be wholly new and strange even to the man's self. Thus it happens that a man becomes something which he never imagined or intended that he would be; capabilities and perhaps deficiencies gradually revealing themselves to him as he lives on.

Can we hold, as some have done, that this inner self is

one and the same for all men,—that the difference betwixt man and man consists merely in the different manner or degree in which this one common essence happens to have been developed in one and in another? Is it true that anybody one may pick up in the street has within him the germs of an Aristotle or a Shakespeare, and has only education, or the structure of his brain—a mere mechanical impediment—to complain of, if his actual thoughts and words do not match theirs? This is a problem which we may well doubt whether we have the means of solving. How far that common nature of man, which is shared by every one of us, extends; and whether there is not in each an individuality, not resulting merely from incomplete development, but reaching to the very core, and differencing one perfectly developed character from another; are questions to which we shall perhaps never find a satisfactory answer.

But, that there is a deep and subtle affinity between that which is greatest in the greatest of men and that which is most universal in the mass, may be gathered from observing the remarkable power which the former exercises, through an uncomprehended sympathy, over the latter. The rarest productions of genius, and the most exceptional displays of intellectual and moral force in the ways of thought or action, do not appear alien to the generality of mankind, like the productions of superior and strange beings, but, on the contrary, are precisely those acts or words which most directly come home to them. It seems probable that the faculty to appreciate is in some sense the mere rudimentary or imperfectly developed faculty to produce the like: that is to say, the difference between the power to appreciate and the power to reproduce is one that appears to result rather from physical causes,—amongst which are to be classed differences in the structure of brain

and nerve,—than from causes purely spiritual or intellectual. If this be so, the boasted superiority of men of genius over the multitude is a much more superficial thing than is frequently supposed. A man of exceptional endowments may in this sense be fitly styled a “representative man,” inasmuch as he exhibits in speech or action that which many thousand obscurer persons might, with the same external advantages, have equalled or surpassed, and which, in a clouded and half conscious manner, lies dormant within them,—in some other sphere, perhaps, to be called into activity.

Let us see, then, how the case stands with these “representative men.” Have they, within the limits of a lifetime, with all the advantages which distinguish them from their fellows, room and scope to develop all that is in them?

We find, on the contrary, that, in order to attain real excellence in any one kind of work,—whether as an artist of this or that class, or as a student of any one branch of knowledge,—there is needed a certain pruning away of many portions of the man’s capabilities. There must be a concentration of the faculties upon the one favourite object, which draws away the strength of them from every other, and so engenders a certain oncsidedness, resulting from the sacrifice of breadth to intensity. Pre-eminence even in the concerns of active business cannot be attained without a large measure of that eager idealizing temper of the mind which is imperfectly designated by the term ambition,—being a desire, not necessarily of surpassing others, but rather of working up to a certain standard erected in the imagination: and this desire, under the influence of which the everyday routine of common life is converted into the working out of an ideal analogous to that of the artist, carries with it a similar narrowing of the faculties through

concentration upon a single object. If we set ourselves deliberately to resist this engrossing tendency of energetic life, by spreading our interests more widely, we soon find that, provided we do this more than in a perfunctory manner by way of pastime or relaxation, we must pay the penalty, by sinking towards mediocrity in our especial branch of work. Thus the mind, capable of many things, must in one lifetime content itself with doing one thing well; all its other aptitudes remaining during that period almost if not absolutely dormant.

But "*ars longa, vita brevis*," goes much further than this. These words cannot fail to remind us, how few there are to whom have been given the leisure and length of days requisite for doing their one work well. We have to deduct the years spent in finding out one's special capability, which may involve many experiments costly of life; the years occupied with mere training; the time lost in "bread-studies;" and, when it is a question of the choicer products of the brain, the long intervals during which the invention, we know not why, seems to be stagnant. At the latter end, must be deducted the years after that period at which the vigour and elasticity of the imagination has begun to fall. The working season is thus but a short one, even in the longest life. And hence it comes to pass that, with the rarest exceptions, the works of men of genius seem to carry about them a certain fragmentary character, almost melancholy; breaking off, or falling into decay, before they have reached that strong maturity of which they appeared to give promise, and leaving on our minds no conviction more distinctly marked than this; that the men were greater than their works,—that it was in them to become and to do more than they in fact were or did.

Authors, artists, statesmen, and public men, are those

concerning whom such observations as the present are most frequently made. This, however, is probably only because the works and the lives of such persons are most before the public, and can with most ease be thus criticized. But no doubt the same thing holds good with the lives of many private persons. Every one's experience may safely be appealed to, for examples of the fragmentary and imperfect character of most men's lives, when the attempt is made to consider that life as a whole, complete without a reference to anything beyond. The training or development which the human soul can obtain within this short season, when compared with its capabilities, amounts apparently to no more than that of an infant school: after a very moderate proficiency has been attained, the pupil is dismissed.

Does this inadequacy of a life time to the proportions of the human soul amount to a proof, or even to a very high probability, apart from revelation, that there is to be a prolonged existence of the soul after death? It seems hardly possible, with any confidence, to answer this question in the affirmative. This inadequacy may, however, justify a surmise—a hope at least—sufficient to prepare our minds with the more confidence to receive such an assurance, if it should be offered to us.

Let us in the next place proceed to examine somewhat more closely the process by which that essence which we call the self or soul enters by degrees into self-consciousness,—that process which we denote by the term self-development. And at the outset it may be convenient to direct our attention to a very fascinating theory, which would exhibit this work of self-development as the main, and in some sense the single, purpose of human life.

That there is some one principal purpose, which may be styled the final cause of human life,—the object, that is,

with which the soul of man is subjected to the discipline of its life on earth,—appears by no means improbable, from an analogy which may be drawn from the harmony of creation in all other respects. We find, in all the arrangements of what may be termed the lower functions of the universe, a symmetrical order, such as indicates unity of design pervading the whole. We find, or think we find, in some directions, a subordination of all these physical arrangements to the well-being of man; and, in others, a subordination of man's merely physical, to his mental and spiritual, well-being. This harmony, and these subordinations, grow more conspicuous, the more deeply and systematically we explore the universe through the aid of physical science. It surely is not to be supposed that, whilst all the lower agencies of nature are moving along a preordained path, each fulfilling its appropriate office as a portion of one self-consistent whole, man alone, the highest, is drifting to and fro, aimless and unprogressive. There must be some single purpose which is being fulfilled amongst the seeming mutability and capriciousness of human life.

This single purpose may be, perhaps the progress of the species, perhaps the development of the individual. That it is the former, is a theory not long ago in vogue, but now discredited, and very naturally. Scarcely anything can be more unsatisfactory than those theories concerning the progress of the species. The only tangible superiority of a generation over that which has preceded it, appears to consist in its having within its reach a larger accumulation of scientific or literary materials for thought, or a greater mastery over the forces of inanimate nature; advantages not without their drawbacks, and at any rate of a somewhat superficial kind. Genius is not progressive from age to age; nor yet the practice, however it may be with the

science, of moral excellence. It is unnecessary, however, to lose time in attempting to measure how much the species is progressive; it suffices to say that the progress of the species is, and always must be, a matter of small interest to the individual. There is no such merging of the individual in the species as would be requisite for our finding any solid consolation amidst our present troubles from the reflection that in a thousand years the race of man will have worked itself clear of such things. And, as this progress of the species is only supposed, after all, to be an improvement of its condition during men's first lifetime, the belief—call it, if you will, but a dream—of a prolonged existence after death, reduces the whole “progress” to insignificance. There is more, even as regards quantity of sensation, in the spiritual well-being of one single soul, with an existence thus continuous, than in the increased physical or intellectual prosperity, during one lifetime, of the entire human race.

Dismissing, then, this notion of a progress of the species, which in the last generation stirred up so much of amiable if not very vigorous enthusiasm, let us turn our attention to the other possible main purpose of human life, viz., self-development in the individual.

There is one thing to be said in favour of the opinion that this must be the predominant purpose for which we live, namely, that this is a thing which is going on everywhere and always. The gradual transition of the inner self from unconscious to conscious vitality; the wakening from a state of torpor; the becoming in act and energy that which we are potentially; the unfolding of our powers in increasing fulness; is a process which is perpetually going forward, more or less, with every human being. Every variety of schooling which men receive whilst living on earth appears to promote some portion of this great

work. Viewed under this aspect, human life appears to lose its desultory and purposeless appearance. If it is like a school, in which, term after term, the same course of lessons, with fresh pupils, seems to be begun and carried on and returned to, in wearisome iteration; if schoolmaster follows schoolmaster, no matter whether the more learned and skilful after the less learned, or *vice versâ*, so that in the quality of the instruction given there is no real progress; at any rate it is like a school in this, that every single pupil goes away from it knowing something more than he knew when he first came there.

Even in this theory, however, there is something incomplete, as we discover so soon as we try to turn it to practical account. For, if accepted without modification, it inevitably leads us to a philosophical Antinomianism, which presently betrays its unsoundness by contradicting some of our most unequivocal primary beliefs.

When this theory of human life is taken up heartily, good and evil, right and wrong, appear to lose their sharp distinction, and may not unnaturally come to be considered as hardly differing otherwise than as degrees of more or less. If my self—that which I potentially am—is to come forth into the light of day, to be torpid and inanimate no longer, but to live; if this be indeed the great purpose for which I am placed upon the earth; then, I may fairly say, let the whole self come forth, the evil that is in me—for it is part of me—together with the good. Thus only can there be that entire and frank unveiling of the inner essence which is demanded. Let the evil burn itself out in the open air, if it be a transient and superficial thing; if it be a permanent part of my self, rooted there, let it expand and find room. No otherwise can I learn my whole lesson, or do the whole work assigned to me. The only difficulty is, on this theory, to understand what is

meant by calling a thing evil. It exists ; it was therefore intended to exist. But, if intended to exist, and if that which exists potentially is to be unfolded into life, this likewise, it must have been intended, is to come to its natural fulness of growth.

Here, however, we find ourselves in a state of paradox : our results are at distinct variance with the common sense of mankind, and therefore probably—on the principles already established—will be found to contradict our own primary beliefs.

Let us proceed to consider, then, whether that which is erroneous in this Antinomian theory cannot be corrected by a closer inspection of the process which we term self-development.

There appears to be in the human mind a species of internal appetite, which impels the undeveloped portion of the self to work its way towards conscious vitality. The presence of this appetite may be detected from a certain uneasiness which we feel when our capabilities have not full play ; an uneasiness which sometimes exhibits itself under the familiar form of *ennui*, sometimes finds relief in the adoption of those works of supererogation called hobbies. Our superabundant energy will run itself off perhaps in turning at a lathe, or learning to play the flute, or writing a book, or breeding prize pigs. We are not to despise this subject of hobbies, for it is a very instructive one. Hobbies do not appear to be chosen at random ; but, whatever part of a man's nature is not adequately developed by his necessary work, is that portion which breaks out into a hobby. If, however, we must turn to something more dignified, the biographies of men of genius inform us that any extraordinary mental endowment carries with it a craving for utterance, delightful in the highest degree

when it immediately precedes or accompanies the act of utterance, but no less painful and oppressive if utterance be denied it. A curious illustration of this fact may be found in the biography of Oliver Cromwell, where we read of his early life as a farmer in Huntingdonshire. And that which takes place, with extreme force, in men of genius, seems to hold good, in its degree, with every man. There is within each of us a spring of internal activity which requires a vent.

This inward energy is the *vis motrix* of self-development : the *vis directrix*, that which gives a definite guidance to the energy, and keeps it constant in one track, is the ideal tendency.

If we pass over, as unimportant for the present purpose, those acts of the mind in which it merely repeats what it has done before, and confine ourselves to such as may be termed acts of origination, that is to say, such as are of a new kind, developing some faculty or energy which has heretofore been dormant : and amongst these, again, confine our notice to such as are voluntary ; we shall find that every one of such acts consists, and necessarily must consist, in the imitation of a model, present to the mind before it begins to act. This must be so, because the act in question must be preceded by a volition, which again must follow or carry along with it some notion or conception of the thing which is to be done. Such a conception may arise from the having seen or heard of a similar act performed by some one else, or from combining acts, or selecting portions of acts, formerly done by the man himself, or simply from some depth within his own nature, revealing to himself a possibility never before realized in action. But, from whatever source derived, the conception must be presented somehow to the mind before the mind can will to perform that particular action. The action thus willed

must consist of an endeavour to realize or imitate in outward act this conception, which is thus taken as a model. The models so received within the imagination may be termed ideals. Every voluntary act of origination consists, then, in the endeavour imitatively to reproduce an ideal.

The model of a voluntary act must contain everything which is in the act itself, so far as the latter is voluntary. Otherwise, there would be some voluntary portion of an act,—*i.e.* some voluntary act,—which would have been performed without a model.

Every model or ideal is, with reference to the proposed imitation of it in the act, perfect. For, the perfection of the imitation of a model consists in producing an exact counterpart of it; which perfection the original already possesses.

We find that the mind is capable of voluntary acts of origination,—that it can and does use its power of volition, not merely in repeating such acts as it has first been impelled by necessity or chance to perform unpremeditatedly, but also in shaping a new course by the imitation of models formed in the imagination.

We have, in the next place, to consider what significance may lie in the fact that such or such particular ideals exercise a power over our minds.

It appears to be the fact that certain ideal models influence men's volitions, and so their conduct, by laying hold of their affections through the imagination. If, either by retrospect of what has passed within ourselves, or by observation of others, we endeavour to ascertain the manner in which this takes place, we seem led to the following conclusions:—In the first place, there appears to be what looks like caprice or waywardness in the mind with regard to its adoption of ideals. Amongst the objects which lie

in its way, and as it were press for its notice, it fastens upon some, and disregards others, according to a law—if we must suppose some law—which is uncomprehended by the mind itself, and is not less undecipherable to a bystander. Not the most admirable or excellent in themselves, not those most recommended by utility, always, are taken; but simply those models which somehow happen to be most congenial to the particular character of the man. If the same objects be presented to two minds, one will fasten upon one portion, and one upon another. The law, therefore, if law there be, is one that involves some idiosyncrasy in the mind itself. Secondly, a fact is to be noted which in appearance would seem scarcely consistent with this capriciousness in the adoption of models; namely that, in the ideals which are gathered together by any one mind, we discover, after taking a sufficient number of them to determine the character of the series, that there is among them a certain harmony and reciprocal appropriateness, such as proves that they have not been accumulated at random. And, what bears still more directly upon the conclusion to which we are tending, observation seems to establish that, as there is thus an individual congruity amongst the ideals which find reception in each single mind, so there is a congruity, of a much broader and more catholic character, amongst the ideals of the human race. That is to say, if we were to place on one side all the ideals, with the means and helps for carrying them out in action, which have at any time gained admittance in the minds of men, ranging them in order of importance according to the frequency and potency of their influence over the mind, and on the other side all the obstructions and hindrances and things contrary to such ideals, the result would be, that we should have the materials for a system of ethics, which would be self-consistent, and would correspond in

its details with the most approved conclusions of ethical science.¹

The idealizing tendency is a continual process of selection, and hence of judgment concerning good and evil. Amongst the multitude of human actions which pass under our notice, some, singled from the rest, attract us strongly ; the others, therefore, stand for us upon a lower level. All that serves us towards the imitation of the former, appears to us desirable or good ; all that thwarts it, evil.

One other circumstance is to be noted concerning the development of ideals within the human mind, namely, that there appears to be a certain progressiveness about it. In proportion as we strive to realize, and do realize, in actual life, the ideals which present themselves to our imagination, fresh and still loftier ideals successively come before it, urging the mind onward from height to height of moral excellence. We have not from the outset a clear and completely formed ideal of perfectness, which is one and the same from first to last. Our ideal moves before us like the cloud-pillar through the desert, advancing as we ourselves advance towards it. We are drawn to something which seems not immeasurably distant from us : we seem to reach the spot where it stood ; yet we see it in advance of us still. Not only so ; but our ideal appears likewise capable of contracting itself, and becoming smaller and poorer, in proportion as we ourselves, instead of striving after it, remain inactive or turn away, inattentive to that impulse from within which would urge us forward.

At this point an objection meets us, which must be considered before we go further. What if all this fancied

¹ It may be objected, perhaps, that there is a class of minds to whom Turpin or Jack Sheppard stand for ideals. The answer is, it is not the villany of these heroes, but some good or at any rate powerful quality mixed with it, which recommends them. There is an ideal of power, which is in itself not only innocent but extremely valuable, though it is often found in bad company.

striving after an ideal be in reality nothing more than the operation of the principle of utility? Whilst we are supposing ourselves, in thus pursuing an ideal, to be following some mysterious impulse from the *penetralia* of our nature, may it not be that we are merely aiming at a course of action which shall be useful, *i.e.* which shall produce substantial advantages to ourselves, or to the community of which we form a part?

Great plausibility is gained for the Utilitarian theory, from the fact that, owing to the harmony of created things, that course of action which is best and highest, is also, in its results, whether immediate or remote, the most conducive to solid and tangible advantages for the human family. What the Utilitarian theory requires, however, and what is by no means so certain, is, that such a course of action should be pursued by us only for the reason that it is conducive to such advantages.

If I desire a thing which is useful, but which I do not know to be useful, it is clear that I do not desire it *because* it is useful. If my desire for it is stronger than my desire for those useful things which it will procure, it is clear that the excess of the former desire must be due to some other motive than the utility. Now some ideals kindle in the mind an ardour of enthusiasm, an affection and longing, such as is not aroused by either the contemplation or the possession of those useful things which are the fruits of its attainment. This enthusiasm is usually strongest in our youth,—that is to say, at the time of life when we are least able to know that the thing desired is conducive to utility. Young or old, however, our desire for the permanent well-being of the human race is for the most part a very tranquil sentiment, by no means apt to run into enthusiasm. If, then, we were to hold that utility is the concealed mainspring of this supposed ideal tendency, we must be

of the opinion that the means towards an end move our desires much more strongly than the end itself, and most strongly when we least know that they are means adequate and fit to bring about the end ; and this, although the only reason why those means move our desires at all, is, that we believe them to be conducive to the end : an opinion which certainly appears somewhat paradoxical.

Thus, without denying that utility may be a very valuable test of good or evil, on account of its being something solid and mensurable, we seem precluded from carrying the Utilitarian theory to the length of saying that usefulness explains and accounts for this tendency in the human mind to aspire after ideals. This latter appears to be an independent motive power, although in its results it may altogether correspond with the deliberate and calculated aiming after the general utility.

This view of the idealizing tendency in human nature furnishes us with the means of correcting what is erroneous in the Antinomian theory above propounded, without parting with that which is really valuable in it, namely, its presenting to us one single, constant, universal movement as the predominant purpose in human life. Instead of simply saying that that purpose is self-development, let us substitute, self-development in conformity with our ideals. Room is then made for good and evil, for right and wrong ; and thus we are enabled to recognize that mysterious dualism, the origin of which may be unaccountable, the reconciling of which with the omnipotence and perfect goodness of the Creator may perhaps be a problem beyond the reach of human reason, but the existence of which it would be an absurdity to deny.

Here, then, is one theory of human life,—that its predominant purpose is the development of the individual nature in the direction of its ideals. This theory consists

of two parts, which rest on different degrees and even kinds of proof, the one from the other. That this is the leading purpose of human life, is a pure hypothesis, based on an analogy which is certainly imperfect. It is open to any one, who prefers it, absolutely to reject this hypothesis, and to believe, either that there is no single purpose or final cause of man's existence upon earth, or that to determine whether there be any, or one, or many, such a purpose, lies wholly beyond the grasp of human reason. Such a speculator would no doubt readily admit that the hunting for some such purpose has in most ages, indeed whenever curiosity has at all been directed towards these subjects, been a favourite occupation for men's mind; but he would add, It has been, however, but a sort of busy idleness, always unfruitful hitherto, and I for one prefer more definite objects of speculation. One could not say that such an answer would be irrational, or even unphilosophical. The case would be very different were any one to deny the truth of that which constitutes the second portion of this theory. That there is within the human mind a faculty or propensity, in virtue of which it projects before it, so to speak, models or ideals, extending in various directions towards an excellence, whether of beauty, or power, or goodness, always in advance of that which the mind itself has realized in act or sensible apprehension; is a matter of fact which can in case of need be clearly proved by a large accumulation of particular instances. It is equally a matter of fact, proveable in the same way, that this tendency has been powerfully and broadly operative in influencing the upward movement of individual characters, and by this means indirectly of promoting the advance of civilization. The significance of this fact is undoubtedly very great. We can be content to waive the question whether it deserves to be ranked as the one principal

movement in human life, and in this sense fitly to be termed the main purpose of it. For our practical guidance it is enough to say, that it is a thing of the utmost importance to each of us.

Thus much concerning ideals: let us now turn to the next branch of the argument.

The desire which men feel to realize their ideals must not be confounded with another instinctive feeling, which impels them in the same direction,—viz., a sense of duty, or moral obligation.

That I wish and long to do or to become such or such, is a fact of an entirely different kind from my feeling that I *ought* to do or become such. No intensity of desire can lead to the feeling of obligation. Utilitarianism cannot explain or account for the sense of duty.

This sense exists, however. Reflection on what passes within ourselves must satisfy each of us of the presence in him of such a feeling. Let us ask ourselves the question whether it be not so, without in the first instance theorizing as to what may be its origin. We shall certainly find that we cannot sufficiently explain our feelings concerning right and wrong by saying that we have satisfied our judgments that it is more profitable on the whole to ourselves that we should adopt a virtuous and shun a vicious course of behaviour. In all matters into which right and wrong do not enter, we may often recognize a possibility of choosing either the more profitable or the less profitable of two courses; and in these matters our judgments concerning those who elect the latter are different in kind from our judgments concerning those who wilfully embark in a course of moral criminality. Vice may be folly, but is not merely folly; it carries with it a kind of moral condemnation peculiar to itself. We feel that we are at liberty

to do that which is unprofitable, or imprudent, in some sense in which we are not at liberty, though we no doubt have the power, to do that which is wrong.

That this sense of obligation has at all times been widely diffused through the human race, might be proved, if necessary, in a variety of ways; but perhaps the most striking and indisputable proof of it may be drawn from the existence, in language, of a class of words which are unmeaning except as expressive of it. Mr. Bentham may say that the word "ought" should be banished from speech; but he has not succeeded in discovering any language, of men who have in any degree emerged from barbarism, which is without an equivalent for it.

Perhaps it may be thought, however, that this singular feeling is artificial, the result of education. It has been found a convenient engine for governing men, it may be said, to impress them with a certain mysterious feeling of obligation or duty: this has gone on for many generations: its usefulness has occasioned it to be borrowed from one code or system of government for another: its diffusion has given strength to it; and so the race of man has become trained to it, as certain dogs are to pointing.

To this it must be answered: what has been learnt can be unlearnt. If this be an artificial and external thing, it is in the power of each of us, though not perhaps without considerable effort, to emancipate ourselves from it. This is found to be the case with every system of philosophy, every creed, every dogma or body of dogmas, however long established and deeply rooted, so far as it has not been based upon the primary instincts of human nature. There have always been a few minds, adventurous and sceptical, which have been able to shake loose from themselves all the teaching which has been in this sense adventitious. The sense of duty, however, appears to be one

of those things which cling to the mind, and cannot for any length of time be shaken off. This is a truth which has been denied in words by many who in their hearts and lives have, perhaps unconsciously, confessed to it.

It has sometimes been argued that this sense of duty cannot be innate in men, because men have differed, even radically and on points the most fundamental, as to what particular things are right and wrong. But the sense of duty is one thing; the knowledge of particular duties another. It may be that the latter is, to a considerable extent, or even entirely, a thing to be acquired through external teaching. I may wish to do right, nay, I may feel myself morally obliged to do right; yet, I may not know, without instruction, whether it is right or wrong to fight a duel or to marry my wife's sister. And, if this be so where the particular duty is confessedly somewhat doubtful, it may be so where the duty seems plainer. It is difficult for us to place ourselves in the frame of mind of those who can feel doubtful whether it is right or wrong to steal, or to commit murder or adultery: yet it is perfectly conceivable that in certain stages of civilization, as with savages, these matters may require teaching, no less than the more questionable duties amongst ourselves require it. It is clear, at any rate, that particular duties *can* be taught; but it is by no means easy to see how a sense of duty could be given from without by any kind of teaching, though this may be adequate to awaken it, supposing it to be in some obscure and half-conscious manner already present to the mind. The knowledge of particular duties, then, stands on an entirely different footing from the sense of duty in the abstract. The one belongs to the intellectual, the other to the moral, portion of our nature. This seems so clear, that it is unnecessary to enter upon

the question, whether the differences amongst mankind, as to what particular actions are right and wrong, are nearly so extensive as, in order to support a theory, they have been represented.

Perhaps the term "sense of duty" does but inadequately express that apparently instinctive feeling within our natures to which we owe the use of the expression "I ought." In all human relations, the term duty implies obligation to a person. But, if the feeling of moral obligation is attached to the mind as closely and as universally as the consciousness of moral liberty, it must be possessed by atheists as well as theists: it must in truth be independent of any opinions we may have formed as to the existence of a moral Governor of the universe. We seem able to reason ourselves, no matter how perversely, into a belief that no such Governor exists. We are not, however, even when we have done this, able to emancipate ourselves from the sense of a certain moral obligation; we cannot, that is, heartily and permanently believe that there is no such thing as right and wrong. This latter appears to be an instinct, while the former is a conclusion of the intellect.

Can we, perhaps, get rid of this difficulty by holding that the existence of this sense of duty, thus emplaced in our natures, is a species of internal witness within ourselves to the existence of a Being, towards whom we are under this obligation, that is to say, between whom and ourselves there exist moral relations? If this be so, then we may say that from natural religion alone, and this not merely through inferences derived from the adaptations of external nature, but by reasoning from our own moral structure, we are taught the existence of God. We are taught it, not indeed by a direct internal revelation, but indirectly, as the result of a process of reasoning,—but of reasoning perfectly legitimate.

This explanation may or may not be satisfactory. It may be met by the objection that this obscure sense of a duty to do right is too little understood by us to be thus reasoned from. We give to what we feel the name of a sense of duty, and in so doing we declare our opinion that it is in some way analogous to the sense of duty which we feel towards some human beings other than ourselves. But the analogy is imperfect. Duties towards our fellow-men are certainly derived from, and correlative with, moral relations which subsist between us and them. We can hardly from this fact infer with confidence that the same thing holds good with that different, though analogous, feeling to which we give the name of moral obligation. For aught we can tell, there may have been implanted in our natures a certain mysterious subjugation to a moral law, although the lawgiver should stand aloof, and keep silence, as it were, leaving us to work out our lives after our own fashion, unpunished, unrewarded, and unnoticed.

It is safer, therefore, to leave these high matters for the present unexplored, and to remain in the lower and securer region where our conclusions can be verified by observation. Without speculating, then, as to the nature and import of this undefinable feeling to which has been given the name of a sense of moral obligation, let each of us consider for himself whether or no such a sense or feeling really exists. This is matter of observation and experiment. Those who, in the search for truth, have sounded the depths of unbelief, can tell us from their own experience, whether, in the darkest night, in the most absolute eclipse of faith, when all revelations have seemed to them like old wives' tales, when they have contemplated the enigma of a godless universe, they have been able ever, for any length of time, and with any inward reality or conviction, to divest their minds of the persuasion that to do right according to their

power was an obligation laid upon their souls, which they could not without a strong inward anguish deliberately tear themselves loose from. If such men can honestly answer this question in the affirmative, then what is here written, and what is to follow, must appear to them absolutely baseless. I believe, however, that men who would make this answer are not to be found.

By the conjoint operation of these two innate principles of our nature, the idealizing faculty and the sense of moral obligation, there are gradually developed within us various feelings, which, quite independently of any opinions of the intellect concerning a system of external rewards and punishments, naturally culminate in that which in the language of theology is termed a conviction of sin. We are attracted towards a moral perfection which opens before us, with increasing splendour and fulness, in proportion as we advance towards it. We feel, by a strong internal instinct, that we are under an obligation to reach, or at any rate to strive towards, this perfectness. In proportion as the vision itself grows brighter, our own past doings and being are more and more felt to be miserably at variance with what they ought to be. This variance, when our attention is steadily fixed upon it, is found by experience to produce feelings of disgust, shame, and self-reproach, which settle upon the mind as an intolerable burthen. It is perhaps not altogether easy to comprehend why it should be so; but the fact is unquestionable, that so it is. This appears to be a phenomenon by no means confined to persons who have been brought up in the Christian religion. Its existence, amongst Pagans, and before the introduction of Christianity, is sufficiently attested; as, for example, in the singular expiations devised amongst the ancient Romans, particularly towards the time of the downfall of the

Republic. It is, as might have been anticipated, a phenomenon which is most conspicuous in what have been styled subjective seasons of civilization; in periods when men have been less than usually absorbed in the struggles for bare subsistence, or by the excitements of political life, and so have been at leisure to turn their thoughts inwards upon themselves. The tendency of advancing civilization is to make such periods more frequent and more continuous, and in this manner to render their especial phenomena relatively more important. It seems pretty certain, however, that the feelings here referred to have existed, with considerable force, in every age. Men have felt themselves to be intensely wretched, because they have felt themselves to be sinful.

That which greatly intensifies this feeling, is a craving which, at a certain stage of spiritual development, besets the mind of every man,—a craving for an internal support and sympathy through communion with the Invisible. This is a difficult subject, but it seems impossible wholly to pass it over. The solitude in which so large a portion of our inner life appears to be passed, and that the portion which is most valuable to us, and in which we seem to be most truly ourselves, comes at times to be felt as irksome, and even as terrible. Men who think or who feel deeply, and who often revolve and brood over their thoughts or feelings, are those to whom this inner solitude is the most oppressive, simply because for such persons this portion of their lives is the most considerable. That which is superficial in us has many companions; were it not so, it would fare ill with the bulk of mankind; but every one alike is conscious that his deeper and more earnest feelings can communicate themselves to few. There is perhaps no one so shallow and so sociable as not to have some places in his mind to which he has felt it impossible to admit any in-

truder. And certainly there are many minds, graver perhaps or more reserved, who habitually feel that such places are precisely those in which the strength and fullness of their own personal character are most distinctly present. This lonely part of a man's nature is likely therefore to assume larger dimensions, in proportion to his own advancement in moral and intellectual dignity. But, in those regions of his nature to which human companionship is inadmissible, there is felt to be a void, painful and oppressive, unless it can in some way be filled by a presence and a sympathy which are not human. Not enthusiasm, not spiritual weakness, but an instinct which attests the dignity of man's nature, and its affinity to a higher nature, bids us, in our inward solitude, aspire to a mystical communion with a Being, that shall comprehend our innermost and most secret moods and thoughts, and sympathize with them, so to speak, in such a manner as that we shall be conscious of that sympathy.

Thus far I have spoken of the mind only as it is in a state of calm. When it is violently shaken by some great sorrow, by bereavement, or desertion, or the unworthiness of a friend, then an internal solitude is more than ever intolerable. At such seasons, at once to appreciate the inadequacy of human sympathy, and to have no other, is certainly a hard lot.

This inward communing with the Unseen is, however, only possible for the soul whilst it is striving upwards towards a better life. When its ideal only presents itself under the aspect of a reproach; when the recollection of what it has been and is, is humiliating, from contrast with that which the soul feels to be its duty; the soul grows unsociable, so to speak, and would gladly shroud itself even from its own introspection.

At any rate, whatever we may think as to these matters,

the fact appears pretty certain, that there is a stage in the development of the spiritual character, at which there is felt an urgent necessity to separate oneself wholly from one's own past life, and to make a fresh beginning. This does not mean, to commence a new and different course of external behaviour, but in some way to break loose from our own past selves, and to be able to regard that which we have done and been up to this moment as something wholly alien from our present nature. Nothing less than that which Christian theology designates by the term, a new birth, will satisfy this need.

This craving for purity, or, to speak more accurately, this sense of an incapacity for making spiritual progress beyond a certain point until we shall have been emancipated from the tyranny which our own past life exercises over us, seems to be one of those propensities or instincts of our nature which are wholly unaccountable. That it exists, is a truth which each man has to discover within himself. When he has once strongly felt it, he cannot doubt its reality; and perhaps till then it would be impossible to convince him of it. One who is in his own person a stranger to it may very fairly wonder why men should not be content with a gradual progress through imperfection towards a higher life. It ought rather to be a source of satisfaction to us, he might reason, to contrast our deeds and capabilities of to-day with the much poorer doings and feebler capabilities of our earlier years. It is so with intellectual progress; we never wish to disown our former ignorance, or the mistakes we made in consequence of it; why should it be otherwise with moral or spiritual progress? Let the growth of the human soul be compared with that of some tall plant, which at first puts forth coarse unsightly leaves, destined to be draggled in the mire, but as it rises upward rises more delicately and gracefully, and

before it perishes crowns the growth with a flower. The beauty of the plant, as a whole, is scarcely marred by the blemishes which are near the ground. Such, indeed, whether we like it or no, is in fact the spectacle which the best life must present, when viewed from without, by a bystander.

To this it must be answered, It is not here a question concerning the growth of a plant, but of a soul, which is a different sort of thing, proceeding after laws of its own, which laws are to be ascertained in no other way than that of observation and induction. These analogies between physical and mental things are exceedingly fallacious. I have no other way of learning in what fashion the soul of man expands or becomes developed, than by carefully watching the process within myself, and comparing what I myself experience with that which I can learn as to the experiences of other men. If I find within myself, rising up at some stage of this growth, a strong instinctive longing for purity, that is to say, not only for an abstinence from sinful acts and thoughts in the future, but for being in a manner washed and purged from that which is sinful in the past, so that it may in some sense belong to me no longer, but be blotted out and cancelled as though it had never been; and if I find abundant proofs in the records of other men's lives, and in assurances direct and indirect furnished by those around me, that in this feeling there is nothing peculiar to myself, but that it is shared by numbers, probably by all, who have reached a similar point of spiritual growth; then it is altogether beside the purpose to tell me that this feeling is unaccountable. If this part of my nature is a mystery to me, it is not the only part of my nature which is so; on the contrary, every one of my primary beliefs, intellectual as well as moral, is alike unaccountable and mysterious. *Omnis scientia exit in mys-*

terium. I feel that the fact is so with me, a man will say ; and I have learnt that the fact is so with others, and, as far as my knowledge goes, with every one who is similarly circumstanced : and that is really all that ever can be known upon the subject.

Mention has been made of two instinctive desires or needs of the moral nature ; the desire for an inward communion with an Unseen Being, and the desire for a restoration to inward purity by a cancellation of the past. These two are intimately connected together ; for it is felt that the stain of sinfulness is a barrier to this spiritual communion. The chief, possibly the only, reason why we are conscious of the latter of these needs is the existence of this connection with the former.

At this point we have reached the final stage of the reasoning proposed at the outset. The existence of these spiritual needs of our nature leads us, whilst we are still outside of the pale of Christianity, feeling our way by the light of reason alone, to recognize, I will not say the absolute necessity, but the urgent need of some Revelation which shall give us a strong and clear assurance that these wants of our nature are not mere impotent longings, but are to be satisfied. If this be so, the philosophy of Primary Beliefs does not lead us to rest satisfied with those beliefs, as in themselves adequate to our requirements, but it is, as one should expect a true philosophy to be, simply the introduction to religion.

Here, however, there naturally arises a question, which deserves careful consideration. Are we justified in maintaining that a Revelation,—that is, as commonly supposed, something supernatural,—is requisite, in order to satisfy us that the restoration to a state of inward purity, here spoken of, is attainable by man, and has been given to ourselves ?

A man who is absolutely convinced of the truth of all that has been written up to this point, yet feels reluctant here to make the important step from natural to revealed religion, might perhaps argue in some such manner as the following :—

Throughout this volume the principle has been systematically maintained, that the instinctive beliefs of our nature constitute so many indications of the objective existence or truth of the things believed. What is true of a belief must likewise be true of the instinctive feeling of a need; for, the ground of this theory is a supposed harmony or adaptation between the nature of the human soul and the external circumstances in which it is placed. The more distinctly it is proved, then, that the human soul craves and appears to need the supporting presence of an inward communion with its Maker, the more unquestionable it becomes, on this hypothesis, that such a communion will be granted to it: and, in like manner, the more clearly we recognize the need of this new birth, the more certain it is that we are intended to receive it. The inference from the need to the existence of the thing needed is an inference of precisely the same kind, and entitled to precisely the same deference, as the inference from the belief to the existence of the thing believed. It has never been pretended that some revelation is requisite, in order to our feeling solidly convinced as to the existence of an external world, or of a self, or of a causal force, or of space or time,—objects which, as has been shown, are certified to us solely by the uncomprehended presence of certain beliefs within our own mind. Why, then, should we draw a distinction between the primary data of the spiritual, and those of the intellectual, portions of our nature? Why insist upon the need of a revelation for the one rather than for the other?

There seems to be a considerable mixture of truth in this way of putting the case, and this mixture is what renders it somewhat difficult to answer. Reasoning in this manner does, on the principles enforced in this volume, go so far as to furnish a certain probability, antecedently to revelation, in favour of the existence of the things thus needed. This probability, indeed, constitutes one portion of that balance of probability which makes up the external evidence of the truth of the Christian religion.

There are, however, many strong reasons for thinking that the probability—for it amounts to no more—thus evolved by pure reasoning is not by any means sufficient for the practical purpose of influencing the lives and conduct of the great bulk of mankind. It tells in support of revelation, but does not dispense with it.

In the first place, it is an argument which is not, and perhaps never can be made, popularly intelligible to the great mass of uneducated minds. Let the train of reasoning on which it is based be never so impregnable, it is, to say the least, a long and complex train. Even to comprehend it, requires a certain patience, on the part even of a practised intellect, such as it would be unreasonable to expect from more than a very few. What is wanted, however, is something which shall produce a distinct and strong impression on the minds and hearts of all men.

But we may go further, and question whether, even to the few who are capable of apprehending this argument in its full force, and who have in fact done so, the argument is adequate to do more than to prepare their minds for the reception of a revelation.

There is amongst our primary beliefs a vast difference, as has already been pointed out, in the distinctness and certainty with which we recognise the fact of their being truly primary. Some are evolved much earlier than others,

and at a more rudimentary stage in the development of our inner nature. Some, again, are reinforced continually by their mutual conformity, and by our habit of acting upon them in, and testing them by, the concerns of everyday life. Those which are evolved in all, or almost all, men, gain very great force by our intercourse with other men, whom we find to share them with ourselves. Those which are evolved only after a considerable degree of moral training, can gain but a smaller measure of this secondary support, in proportion as the number of minds, similarly trained, with which our own comes in contact, is smaller; and even this is weakened, on account of the apparent, though illusory, contradiction to their universality, which is brought to us through intercourse with the, perhaps far more numerous, minds in which the belief in question has not been developed. Thus, although in abstract philosophical truth there is no difference between our primary beliefs with respect to the deference we ought to pay them; yet the practical force of this deference is very different, in proportion as there is a less irresistible accumulation of proof that the beliefs in question are truly primary.

Now, of all these beliefs, those which have to do with the spiritual, as contrasted with the purely intelligential, portions of our nature, are the latest developed in order of time, and are developed in the smallest number of minds; for the simple reason that the development of them, in such a manner as to make them available for the purpose of this argument, requires a twofold cultivation, that of the intellect and also of the moral or spiritual character. Further, these spiritual beliefs are not of such a kind as to be reinforced by analogies derived from external nature.

If, for example, we have attained to the belief that, for the possibility of moral progress beyond a certain stage,

there is needed a cancellation of a man's past life, such as is expressed by the term regeneration, we are so far from being supported in this belief by any analogies derived from external nature, that we are at once confronted by what seems a very formidable difficulty, namely, that everything in external nature appears to negative the possibility of such a thing. There is in nature, as operative upon man, an unbroken stream of moral retribution, which follows out every act to its remotest consequences with unrelenting persistency. No evil deed of ours can, in its outward effects upon ourselves and upon others, be undone by penitence or remorse. Physical causes do not operate with more certainty and uniformity upon material objects, than do moral actions upon the minds and lives of those who have performed them. And in this unbroken law of moral retribution we recognise God's justice; and to this justice there is something in our own minds which answers assentingly; we recognise that it is righteous; and, when we are impartial, that is to say when we are thinking of its operation upon other than ourselves, we strongly and sternly approve of it. Before we can believe, then, that, as between man and his Maker, there is a possible regeneration for the soul, we must believe that the relation between man and his Maker is a relation not only wholly unlike, but in some important respects diametrically opposite to, every relation of which we have experience in transactions between man and man.

If exception be taken to this statement of the facts, as not strictly accurate, the only thing that can with any show of reason be alleged against it is, that we do find in human life some imperfect resemblance to this cancellation of evil deeds, in the fact that men are able really to forgive offences committed against themselves, and even perhaps to feel towards the offender as if he never had committed

them. What has been said in the preceding paragraph may properly be modified to this extent. Let us proceed to consider, then, how the argument now stands.

What is the true relation between God and the soul of man, can only be perfectly known, it is obvious, by those who can know not only what is the nature of man, but also, so far as the two are brought into relation with one another, what is the nature of God. If the former is to a great extent a mystery to ourselves, the latter is certainly not less a mystery. Apart from revelation, the only means we have for partially approximating to such a knowledge are, an observation of the outward manifestations of God's nature given to us in His dealings with the human race in the world, and an introspection or some other mode of apprehending that which is best and highest, and so, we may fairly think, most Godlike, in the nature of man himself. Let us concede that forgiveness of injuries is in this sense the most godlike attribute of man. Still, when it is considered that the man who forgives injuries is himself fallible, and conscious of a need of forgiveness; and that the man who forgets injuries, and thus most nearly approximates to that cancellation of the past which we are considering, very frequently does so, not so much out of magnanimity as out of indifference, coldness, or absorption in other objects of thought; we shall see that this human cancellation of the past offers a very imperfect analogy to such a cancellation on the part of man's Creator. And, when we likewise bear in mind that this analogy appears to be distinctly contradicted by that other, and seemingly more direct, manifestation of God's mind which is given in the external world, it seems impossible that we should arrive at any very clear and positive assurance, apart from revelation, as to this divine forgiveness.

We really need a very strong assurance on this head.

Even between human beings, it is not easy for a friendship which has once been broken in upon by an injury to be so perfectly cemented by forgiveness, as to be again that which it was before; and the difficulty is increased in proportion as the friendship has been intimate and tender. This difficulty of reunion is principally on the side of the offender, and seems to be insuperable, unless he can be very thoroughly convinced that the injury has so passed out of the mind of his friend as to be in a manner blotted out from it. Until the offender has been perfectly satisfied that this is so, there is on his part a certain timidity or sense of insecurity which prevents a perfect renewal of confidence. All this is applicable, but with greater intensity, to the relation between the soul of man, when conscious of guilt, and his Maker; this relation being the most tender and intimate, despite the awe which must accompany it, of all human relations. Then it is to be remembered that there is a disturbing influence in strong desire, which troubles the judgment; so that the things we earnestly long for appear only the more incredible on that account.

On the whole, then, it seems pretty clear that the strong assurance of forgiveness which we need cannot be attained by the bulk of mankind, probably can be attained by no man, unless there be given some revelation of God's will, such as shall confirm that doubtful anticipation of it to which we may be led by reasoning.

A word or two must be added, with reference to what was said concerning a supposed harmony of the moral nature. It is by no means clear that there is the same harmony and self-completeness in this as in the intellectual part of our nature. In speaking of either as being harmonious, we are of course to look rather to the ideal than the actual development of it. From the intellectual

nature we are to extrude, as so many superficial flaws or excrescences, the errors and bewilderments which have always in fact abounded in it; we say that it is complete, or harmonious, not because its operations are in fact free from errors, but because it contains within itself the mechanism, so to speak, for detecting and purging away those errors. So of the moral nature; it may in like manner be termed harmonious, when viewed ideally, if its vices and sins are only superficial things, which the soul contains within itself the means of extruding, in the idealizing tendency conjoined with the sense of moral obligation. To a very great extent, speaking still as one who has not yet accepted the truth of a revealed religion, this certainly appears to be the case. Many of those forces of our nature which in fact frequently impel us to evil deeds, many appetites and passions, are in themselves not merely innocent, but necessary; and it is the misapplication of them, or the failure to subordinate them to higher motives—that is to say, it is simply a negative thing, the non-development of that which is higher—which perverts them into causes of moral evil. But, after the fullest allowance has been made for this, it still appears to be somewhat questionable whether there is not in the world a residuum of moral evil which cannot be thus explained away. Propensities to evil appear to be in some measure hereditary. How large is the inheritance of the human race, in this respect, is a matter very difficult to estimate. That evil is subordinated to good, so that it may truly be pronounced to be comparatively a mere superficial thing in man's nature, seems to be pretty certain. But there yet appears to remain a certain "mystery of evil" which forbids us confidently to pronounce the moral nature of man to be, even ideally, in harmony with itself. If this be so, the inference that a regeneration of the soul, if requisite for

the restoration of such harmony, must, apart from revelation, be a matter of certainty, is not a legitimate one.

It may very likely be thought that this portion of the argument has been too much laboured. More persons, I dare say, will be disposed to doubt the necessity of this renewal of the inward nature, than to hold that the fact of such a renewal can be proved by natural reason alone. Nothing but the importance of the conclusion could excuse the length to which this chapter has already run.

But the conclusion, if it be a sound one, certainly is important. We seem led, by a chain of reasoning based on the recognition of the primary beliefs of man's nature, to the conclusion that reason alone is inadequate to satisfy the requirements of that nature, unless supplemented by revelation. Philosophy thus proves itself, not, as it has too often been thought, the antagonist, but the handmaid, of Christianity. Without any undue narrowing or cramping of its range, but, on the contrary, whilst vindicating the utmost latitude to it, we have seen that philosophy, unshackled and left to itself, ends its career by taking refuge in faith; in faith, not blind nor irrational, not scepticism in disguise, but such as, recognizing the vast and ample domain of reason, recognizes also a region that lies beyond it.

At this point, then, philosophy abdicates in favour of theology. The Christian religion presents to us the assurance of this new birth, which we have discerned to be needed. It shows to us how the seeming contrariety between God's absolute justice and man's need of regeneration is to be reconciled. It alone enables us to ascend that height, inaccessible to human reason, at which the law which binds together acts and their consequences, so that there is a continual flow of retribution in the moral, as of causation in the natural, order of existence, ceases to operate

It does this, through an exhibition of the most solemn and affecting kind, an exhibition operative not through the intellect alone, not alone upon the few who can carry on great trains of abstract thought, but having power, as history and experience prove, mightily to transform the lives and inmost natures of whole generations of men—the exhibition, namely, of that mysterious act of divine love by which the Son of God, in some transcendent sense One with the Creator, became man, lived amongst us, and died to redeem us.

CHAPTER II.

THE LIMITS OF AUTHORITY IN THEOLOGY.

SUPPOSING that there is a religion which claims to be based upon a revelation of God's will, either recorded in a book or deposited with a living and continuous church ; and supposing that a man thinks he has satisfied himself as to the external historical evidences in support of that claim ; are there, or are there not, it may be asked, any limits, fixed by reason or the moral sense, to the demands which that book or that church may make on his belief, and, if there are limits, what are they ?

When one has made the great step from natural to revealed religion, he may fairly expect to find some truths taught him upon authority, such as are at any rate different from those which he has himself been able to gather by the exercise of his reasoning faculties. It seems not unlikely that the former may, in appearance at least, contradict in some respects the latter. Yet, as it is through his reasoning faculties, more or less, that he has come to know that the so-called authority has a rightful claim on his submission, it is conceivable that a violent degree of contradiction between authority and reason might be fatal to the former ; since an authority which should, by perpetually pronouncing on the side adverse to reason, induce a scepticism as to the validity of the reasoning faculties, could hardly prevail on that scepticism not to extend itself to the process by which those faculties had first brought the man to accept the authority.

In order to discuss the question here propounded with any chance of coming to a conclusion, it seems necessary to narrow it, by defining beforehand some of the conditions on which a solution shall depend. This may be done by bringing in the conclusions arrived at in the preceding chapters of this volume. Let the question now before us be argued, then, simply as it exists for those persons who accept the conclusions, theological as well as philosophical, set forth in those chapters.

In them was presented a train of thought by which a man who shall have attempted to construct for himself a system of philosophy and of natural theology, may be led at last to discern the need within his own nature of an authoritative, *i.e.*, an historical or external, revelation as to certain matters of fact; and not only this, but to infer from the existence of the need a strong antecedent probability in favour of the existence of the thing needed.

One who shall have approached revealed religion from this side may reasonably hope to find in it the fulfilment of two conditions, *viz.*, that it shall satisfy the need referred to, and that it shall do this without breaking down the ladder by which he has mounted to that point.

Concerning the first of these conditions, which is by far the most important, very little needs here to be said. Happily, so far as the Christian religion is concerned, there is scarcely one of its many sects or schools in which the "peculiar truth" of this religion,—the provision of a divine machinery, so to speak, for the regeneration of the soul of man,—is not contained. Even those which are least "orthodox" have for the most part, at any rate, some adumbration of this doctrine. It is indeed hardly possible to profess oneself a follower, in any sense, of Jesus, and at the same time wholly to ignore or deny that "new birth" which was so conspicuous a portion of His teaching.

Again, even those sects which seem in our Protestant estimation—and why should I hesitate to add, which in point of fact are—the most sunk in degrading superstitions, still maintain this great truth, though it may be almost smothered in errors. Thus far, therefore, there is a fraternity amongst us all.

There is about the “Catholic faith,” when held sincerely and in its fulness, a species of internal evidence, derived from the manner in which it satisfies and nourishes that which is best and highest in our own nature. This fact is recognized even by those who hold the faith itself to be an illusion. There is a species of restlessness—a feeling of incompleteness—a dim sense of being in search for one knows not what—in minds which are to a certain degree awakened to a spiritual life, yet have not reached this faith, or, for whatever reason, have refused to surrender themselves to it. On the other hand, when one is so fortunate as to believe these things heartily, with or without logical grounds, one feels oneself, so long as the belief lasts, to be in a manner at home. If we could only abstain from rationalizing; be content with the result, without investigating the evidence; think only of the salutary effect of this faith upon ourselves, without perplexing ourselves with questions touching the fate of those to whom this faith has not been given; if, in a word, we could accept this religion in childlike simplicity; then, as we learn from the lives of Christian men in all ages, we should be capable of heights of sanctity, fortitude, self-denial, and unselfishness, such as in no other way, that we know of, can be reached: we should be sustained by a mystical communion, in the strength of which all human ills would fail to touch us, and all human affinities, the very dearest, would seem remote: we should enjoy a peace, settled and firm; our souls would “dwell at ease.”

Let us be careful to state nothing with exaggeration. We must neither magnify this psychological fact beyond its true dimensions, nor overlook the circumstance that it may possibly be to some extent accounted for, in a manner entirely independent of the truth or falsity of the religion in question.

That a very high degree of moral excellence, in the very directions here referred to,—viz., as regards fortitude, self-denial, love to man and fear of God,—is attainable without a Christian's faith, can scarcely be denied. We should perhaps hardly be justified in stating the distinction between Christian and non-Christian morality more strongly than this,—that there is about the former a certain mixture of sensitiveness and tranquillity which is unattainable by the latter. The Christian alone, apparently, can perfectly and habitually feel himself to be in the position of a child at once tremulously anxious to do his utmost to please his father, and convinced that his father will make the most indulgent allowance for his short-comings. The Christian alone, also, is truly raised above the troubles and anxieties of life, not only as affecting himself, but as affecting those who are most dear to and depending upon him; and on this account has so much the more of mental energy to spare for things which are less secular.

Now it is true that these differences in his favour may, to some extent at least, be accounted for by a bare consideration of the kind of things which he believes, whether those things be in reality true or false. He believes that he has been restored to a state of purity, and is thus emancipated from that scornful and reproachful retrospect of his own past life which is to other men a cause of littleness, by discouraging the aspiration after something higher: he believes in a future life, which reduces to comparative insignificance all that is not spiritual in the present: above

all, he believes in the presence and mystical communion of a Friend, able and willing to shield him and his from all real evil. These beliefs, so long as he holds them, be they illusions and no more, appear sufficient to account for this full inward contentment which is the main source of his spiritual strength.

Still, when all this has been fairly allowed for, there remains the fact, that the nature of man is such that these lofty thoughts are felt to be, not extravagant, but congenial and in a manner natural and appropriate to it. This circumstance of itself appears sufficient, from the harmony of created things, to afford a certain presumption (subject to the limitations pointed out in the preceding chapter) that the things thus believed are probably true.

Thus the case stands with us, so long as we are content not to rationalize, but to accept the religion on trust, without enquiring into the objective historical evidences in its support. And this in fact is the case with the vast majority of mankind; at any rate, except during seasons of unsettlement of theological opinion.

In such seasons, however, which seem to recur periodically, many men—and in all seasons some men, who are of a questioning temper—are impelled to quit this happy resting-ground, and to search out for themselves the foundations upon which their security has been laid. It is idle to declaim against this propensity. It is a propensity rooted in the nature of man, and placed there, we cannot doubt, for some wise purpose.

Thus we are brought to the second condition of a revealed religion which is to maintain itself in the allegiance of mankind, and, in particular, of the man who has been once led to it by a process such as that described in this volume: not only must it satisfy his spiritual need, but it must be defensible, on every side whence attack can be apprehended,

by reasonings of such a nature as not to invalidate the chain of argument which has first brought him to the reception of it.

The necessity for this is pretty evident. A man who out of scepticism has, by such a process as has here been described, emerged into religious convictions, may not unnaturally be for a good while carried by these new convictions smoothly along with the current theological speculations of the sect or school to which he has attached himself. The mere relief to the intellect afforded by the process of leaning on an external authority will serve to keep his misgivings asleep, for some time after the first zeal of his conversion shall have passed away. Sooner or later, however, both the stimulant and the narcotic will have expended their strength, and the long disused habit of inquisitiveness will revive. It is pretty certain that one of the first questions to be then considered will be this:—If I were to repeat the mental process which I have been going through, should I again arrive at the same result? Now, in thus travelling over the ground a second time, our enquirer does so with a difference. He brings to the earlier stages the knowledge which he has acquired, and the opinions he has formed, at the latest: he collates the two together, with a natural preference for those later-formed opinions which lie nearest to his then present state of mind. If, then, there be an incurable inconsistency between the two sets of opinions, he finds himself checked and interrupted from the very outset, and is unable to reconstruct, with any satisfaction to himself, that old train of reasoning which had first led him to the threshold of revealed religion. What is he to conclude? Not, perhaps, necessarily, that he has been mistaken with regard to these later-formed opinions: not, that the religion is not true: but, at any rate, that he individually has approached the religion in

the wrong way, that the ladder by which he had mounted to that height has broken down, and that he is left in the clouds, he knows not how. He can help no fellow-mortal to climb by the way that he himself came up.

This is a position, to say the least of it, very tempting to scepticism. The man who finds himself placed in it must have a very poor opinion of his own intelligence. He has, with immense pains, after the expenditure most likely of many years, given himself a very striking practical proof of the infirmity of human reason. The chances are that he will either abandon the struggle altogether, and take refuge in some servile form of church or book idolatry, or become a mere hypocrite, or relapse into open infidelity; in any case a scepticism, covert or open, threatens to be the result. And unhappily, the keener and more vigorous his intellect, the greater is the probability of such a termination.

The paradox of religion will present itself to a mind in this situation under the following form:—I set out with a faith in what may be termed the instincts of my intellectual and moral nature; I found myself constructed from my birth, so to speak, prone and apt to entertain certain opinions; these were no private opinions of my own, nor was this aptitude for them any peculiarity; the human race, I found, was endowed with the same tendency. Every variety of circumstances amidst which men were placed appeared alike, though not perhaps all with equal rapidity, to develop these primary beliefs of the species. The alternative which alone presented itself to a logical mind, seeking above all for self-consistency, was either to reject these primary beliefs, and so to plunge into the most absolute scepticism, or to accept them altogether; that is to say, after once being thoroughly convinced, upon a searching analysis, that this or that belief was truly primary in this sense, to accept the existence of the belief

as a sufficient guarantee that the thing so believed was true. Of this alternative I accepted the latter member. By this way of thinking I was led, through a chain of reasoning which still appears to me irrefragable, to the conviction that the existence of certain spiritual needs within my nature, of which I was and still am conscious, carried with it the reasonable expectation—still, like all the rest, a matter of faith—that there must be, somewhere or other, a provision by which those needs would be satisfied. Such a provision I found, complete, satisfactory, wonderful, conveying all that I could desire. So far well. I found, however, that, in order to lay hold and to retain hold of that provision, it was necessary for me likewise to receive certain doctrines, inextricably interwoven with it, which, not transcended but contradicted, on this side and on that, primary beliefs of the intellect and primary beliefs of the moral nature. From this contradiction I was constrained to conclude that *some* primary beliefs might be illusory. I was mistaken, then, either in holding that the authority of all primary beliefs rested on the same basis, so that all must stand or fall together; or else in holding that *any* primary beliefs could be accepted as authoritative. I cannot discover any ground for drawing a distinction amongst the primary beliefs, nor yet for arbitrarily selecting some and rejecting others, from motives of mere convenience. I am driven, then, to reject them all. But, rejecting all, I part with those which led me to the acceptance of a revelation. The web which had been woven with so much pains is completely unravelled. Thus I am brought round at last to that thorough-going scepticism, which it seems I did wrong in ever quitting.

All this is of course on the supposition that there is a necessary and incurable contradiction between the accessories of the religion and the primary beliefs of the human

mind. If there be, the legitimate conclusion is scepticism ; if there be not, it is not so.

It is scepticism : it is not merely that my way of approaching the religion was erroneous. It is not now open to me to begin afresh, along a new path ; for a proof has been given to me that my primary beliefs are inconsistent with one another, and consequently are wholly unreliable. But, without the aid of primary beliefs, I have no power of estimating the force of external, historical evidence : I cannot, therefore, attain to the belief in a revelation by any natural means. If I am to receive it, it must be by some supernatural illumination, which I now, made sceptical as to primary beliefs, have no means of distinguishing from the illusions of delirium.

Thus we seem driven to the conclusion that there is one absolute limit to the supremacy of revelation over reason : a revealed religion must be able to maintain itself against assault, by arguments which do not contradict the primary beliefs of the human race.

It may be well, at once, since the prevalent tendency of scepticism in theology is to assail the supernatural, that is the miraculous, character of the Christian documents, to point out that, however this controversy may stand in itself, there appears to be nothing contradictory to the philosophy of primary beliefs in the opinion that miracles have taken place. What has been said concerning causation leaves room—which some philosophies do not—for the possibility of a miracle, in the plain popular sense of the word, *i.e.*, of a break, by an act of divine volition, in the series of causation, or, in other words, in the uniformity of physical sequences. For, this chain goes no further back than to volition. Every act, even of human volition, is, in a modified form, an example of such a break ; limited, indeed, in its power of operation, so soon as it comes into

contact with things corporeal, but thus limited, apparently, only because the power of the human mind over matter is not absolute. We have but to suppose a will absolutely sovereign over matter, and we can readily conceive that such a will might at pleasure break in upon, and vary in any direction, these material sequences to which we give the name of natural causes and effects. Our philosophy does not make necessity sovereign over even human will; still less, over the divine. That such variations, arbitrary and fitful, if we please to call them so, or rather, as it is wiser and more reverent to term them, springing from motives beyond our fathoming, do not occur very frequently, is a mere contingent fact, learnt from experience; and the degree of infrequency is a mere matter of evidence, or in other words of observation, not even conjecturable *à priori*: whence the possibility of miracles must be inferred.

We may go a step beyond bare possibility. There is, it appears, in the human mind, and this not alone, perhaps not principally, in the illiterate, but everywhere and amongst all, a certain aptitude, and one might almost say eagerness, for the reception of supernatural narratives. This is so marked a phenomenon, that it seems hardly possible to believe that any religion, which should be wholly divested of the miraculous element, would be capable of any wide popular acceptance. Almost if not quite every form of false religion, ancient or modern, from Buddhism to Mormonism, pretends to be attested by miracles. It may perhaps be possible to explain away this singular tendency of the human mind, to resolve it into other elements, and so to show that it is derivative, and then that it is unhealthy or a sign of intellectual childishness. Until this shall have been done, however, the existence of this tendency, so wide-spread, and so apparently permanent, affords, on the principles of this philosophy of primary beliefs, a

strong presumption that this receptivity for the miraculous indicates the objective existence of a something external which answers to, and is to satisfy it. Thus the existence of miracle appears, not possible merely, but probable.

Further, the nature of that doctrine which is distinctively the Christian revelation, is such, that there appears to be a certain harmony and fitness, so to speak, in having the announcement of it introduced and accompanied by supernatural facts. It is itself a doctrine of so transcendent a character; so breaking in upon, though without contradicting, the conclusions we should be apt to frame by mere unassisted reason; raising the mind to such heights of wonder; carrying us so entirely into a supersensible region; that it would seem almost more surprising if it should have confronted us amongst the everyday realities of ordinary life, than when we find it heralded by angels and a wonderful star, and bearing along with it into the world such disturbances of life's ordinary laws, as to make us feel, tangibly and corporeally, that we are amongst the wonders of that unknown universe, of whose vast shadow we are at all times dimly and mysteriously conscious.

Thus far, perhaps, reason may lead us in this direction. All beyond is matter of evidence, belongs to theology, and would be out of place in this treatise. What has been said may suffice to show that the miraculous character of the Christian evidence is not contradictory to the philosophy of primary belief.

This miraculous element renders one of the ordinary canons of historical criticism inapplicable to the criticism of the Christian sacred books. We cannot, in the case of these books, pronounce the record of a supernatural fact as *ipso facto* null, nor as casting a suspicion of untrustworthiness around it. We do this with Herodotus or Livy; but

here, when we have got so far as to believe a miracle to be possible, probable, and even suitable, the historian's scepticism as to the marvellous would be out of place. A vast accumulation of inductive evidence justifies the secular historian in holding it as established that, in the ordinary relations of public as well as private life, even at the most eventful crises of national well being, Divine Providence does not see fit to vary the uniformity of physical sequences. This probability, however, does not really come into operation when it is a question of the great transaction recorded in the New Testament; this being an act absolutely unique and unparalleled, and affecting those spiritual deeps of man's nature which bring him into relation with the unseen and supersensible world.

Are there not, however, other canons of historical criticism, which are as strictly applicable to the historical record of this revelation as to any other histories? And will not the bold and honest application of these canons to the Scriptures lead us to conclusions very much at variance with the English popular theology of the present day? These are questions which at present appear to be forcing themselves upon the public attention.

Upon these questions, vast as is the importance of them, I do not here pretend to touch. I shall content myself with some reflections which appear to show that, pending these controversies, and indeed whatever may be the issue of them, there is nothing in the profession of, at any rate, lay membership of the Church of England, which is necessarily incompatible with the maintenance of the condition above referred to, viz., that revealed religion must be able to maintain itself against assault, by arguments which do not contradict the primary beliefs of the human mind.

The standing point of the Church of England, as distinguished from Roman Catholicism on the one hand, and

from Protestant dissent on the other, I take to be this; that we base our religion upon the Bible, as interpreted by the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The canonical Scriptures, in the first place, *contain*, we are taught to believe, *everything* that is necessary to salvation. That is to say, without rationalizing as to the nature and extent of inspiration—a mysterious subject which we cannot pretend to fathom by *à priori* reasoning—we are to believe that from these books there may be gathered as full, trustworthy, and circumstantial an account of the great fact of man's redemption; as complete an exhibition of the true relations between man and his Maker; as clear a rule of conduct; and as moving incentives to right action; as shall satisfy the requirements of man's nature during his sojourn upon earth. Further than this, the Articles of our religion and the Formularies, which are the sole authoritative conditions of membership, do not go. Those theologians who attempt to abridge the right of admission to our Church within narrower limits than this, are unlawfully (though I dare say with the most praiseworthy intentions) attempting to curtail Christian liberty. We have absolute latitude to believe or to disbelieve that all the statements of facts in these books are literally and historically true. There is nothing unorthodox in holding that there is in them a considerable mixture of pure mythos or fable; that what is set down there as simple history is as little trustworthy in many of its circumstances as any other ancient history; that science contradicts many of the assertions made in these books; that some passages indicate in the writers a very imperfect state of moral culture; that certain portions of their teaching, whether in the way of example or precept, would, if taken alone and unmodified or uncorrected by other portions, be highly dangerous; in a word, that this collection of books

is not pure refined silver, but rather silver in the ore, largely mixed with baser matter. I do not assert that these propositions are true; simply that they may with perfect right be held by any member of the Church of England.¹

This latitude is entirely conformable with the philosophy of Primary Beliefs, as here propounded. An *à priori* theory of revelation, which should pronounce beforehand, from the nature of things, that revelation must be such or such, would be inconsistent with that inductive method which this philosophy insists on from first to last. We do not suppose ourselves to know to the bottom, and from the bottom, even the nature of man; still less, the nature of God. We are incapable, therefore, of constructing a necessary theory of revelation. What revelation ought to be, can only be gathered in the way of probability, from observing what revelation in fact is. To this end, we should invite and encourage, not repel and fear, the most searching criticism of our sacred books. The criticism even of professed enemies will be valuable to us, as it may be expected to be the severest and the boldest. We should regard it, therefore, as the greatest calamity for our religion, were it hemmed in by any restrictions, in the way of Creed or Article, which should militate against the freedom of these investigations.

¹ "Tillotson suggests, and almost gives it as his own opinion, that whole books, for instance, the Book of Proverbs, are uninspired. Baxter (who refused a bishopric, and was an ordained minister of the Church of England) considered parts of the Psalms immoral. Chillingworth speaks in the most slighting manner of Ecclesiastes. Warburton elaborately defends the doctrine of what he calls 'partial inspiration.' Bishop Marsh translated Michaelis, and declared his approval of that author's belief that the Gospel of St. Luke was not inspired. Bishop Horsley said that he would 'strenuously contend' for the right of controverting the truth of passages in the Bible, which might contradict science. Archbishop Whately said that more was not to be expected of the historical books of the Old Testament than that they should be instructive and honestly written." (Fraser's Magazine, vol. lxx., pp. 658-659.)

Negatively, it appears, our Church has, though indirectly, yet most expressively, pronounced against the doctrine that the Bible is a mere aggregation of oracles, every single portion of which is supernaturally freed from all admixture of human error. She has done so, by her doctrine concerning the efficacy and uses of a church. For, were the Bible such, there could be no need of a church, unless for the very humble business of reading and otherwise disseminating Bibles. Every man who could read could dispense with the offices of a minister of religion. And to this very logical conclusion the matter seems to have been pushed by the Society of Friends.

Not so the Church of England. She, in her Articles and Liturgy, distinctly recognises, it appears, the institution of the visible Church of Christ. For this body are claimed the promises of our Lord : "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it;" "where two or three are gathered together, there am I in the midst of you;" and "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." To this body is not simply entrusted the task of organizing and keeping in motion a certain machinery for the evangelization of the world; not simply the custodianship of sacred oracles; but there is also given to it the promise of a divine guidance, by the aid of which it shall be enabled to make, from time to time, developments of Christian doctrine, and, so far as practicable from the nature of the case, to adapt the religion to the varying circumstances of time and country. "The Church hath authority in controversies of faith."

Yet, with all this, the visible church, as it exists upon earth, in a concrete shape, that is to say, as it is embodied in particular churches, not only is not infallible, but, as we are to believe, "has erred, not only in living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith."

The authority thus given to the church, with this limitation to it, is matter simply of revelation to us ; it is not discoverable *à priori* by the reasonings of natural theology. There is in it, however,—which is all that it is here necessary to state,—nothing at variance with the principles of the philosophy or theology of primary beliefs. On the contrary, it is precisely such as might have been anticipated, of course only in the way of reasonable conjecture, from those principles.

For, as has been shown, that process of gradual self-development by which the highest and purest possibilities of the human soul are, mainly through the idealizing tendencies, brought forth into conscious vitality, is not a solitary process. One principal stimulus to it is given in the sympathetic action of mind upon mind. The idiosyncrasies of each need and obtain correction by the more enlarged knowledge of human nature which is acquired through this process. This is not more certainly true of the active than of the purely intelligential portion of our nature. We cannot learn the possibilities of man as man except through the discipline of social life. Thus a certain “communion of saints” is an indispensable condition towards growth in saintliness. And in this sympathetic study of, and fellow-working with, minds congenial with our own, which raises the lower nature through intimate affinity with the higher, we have the germ of a church.

That “particular churches” are liable to error, is no more than might have been conjectured from the consideration, that the development of the nature of man as man, here spoken of, is a gradual process, towards which each particular form of civilization does but contribute a portion. We are to learn this nature, not merely from what we ourselves personally can become, not merely from what this or that generation of men has produced, but

from what the human race, in all ages up to the latest point of time which we have reached, has been and is. Our children, perhaps, may learn deeper truths, under a more favourable culture, than are attainable by ourselves. Thus, as the world grows older, there may be growing up a more truly catholic church; and this church is not to be hidebound by the traditions, but must have liberty to discover and to discard the errors, of the past.

We need, however, some supreme and infallible guide to truth. If the Bible itself is not a mere collection of oracles, but demands some process of selection, comparison, or criticism, such as falls within the province of a church; if that church exists for each of us individually only in the form of "particular churches;" and if particular churches are liable to error; what is that guide which is to disclose and to correct these errors, and from time to time purge and purify the religion of a particular age?

To this question we are taught by the catholic church to answer,—the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

This again is a truth given to us by revelation, and it transcends, but still without contradicting, the conclusions of mere human reason. Not only does it not contradict, it entirely harmonizes with, those conclusions.

Something has already been said concerning that mystical communion between the soul of man and its maker, which has in all ages been felt as a necessity for the inward life of the soul; which has supported and nourished that life; the deprivation of which has been felt as the most intolerable burthen. On this mysterious subject a man can only speak with faltering lips. One who should pretend with accuracy to distinguish what portions of those "promptings from the penetralia" of his mind or heart are truly his own, and what portions are given to him from some source external to himself, may justly be sus-

pected of enthusiasm or untruthfulness. But no one, who has either felt within himself, or has learnt from the experiences of minds saintlier than his own, that which such minds know of these inner promptings, can hold it as incredible that in this way divine truths are made known to men, by an illumination which transcends the understanding. One who has learnt to reverence, as things sacredly to be accepted, beliefs emplanté within his own nature, unaccountable, unverifiable from without, is prepared beforehand to accept the Christian doctrine concerning the influence of the Holy Spirit, through a personal inspiration guiding men to all truth.

The best antidote to the dangers and abuses to which this doctrine is liable, is a reasonable submission to the authority of the church; by which we may be prevented from mistaking our private fancies and personal prejudices for the results of a supernatural inspiration. The true safeguard against the false teaching of "particular churches" is the conviction that every such church is liable to error. But, when the teaching of the church, and the witness of the Spirit in a man's heart and conscience, are found to coincide, there is for that man a sufficient assurance that he is so far in possession of the truth.

Thus it appears that, in its main features, the doctrine of the Church of England can stand the test which a reasonable religion must be subjected to; there is in it nothing irreconcilable with the primary beliefs of the human mind. And this should be sufficient for a layman. He may fairly leave to professed theologians the vindication of minor details. It is perfectly open to him, whilst still adhering to this church, to hold that in many respects it needs reformation. He may lament that there should be, speaking generally, so wide a divergence between what may be called the clerical, and the lay, tone of feeling upon

many important subjects. He may deplore the timidity with which bishops and clergymen appear to shrink from controversies which deeply interest laymen. He may think that ceremonial is too much thought of by one school, whilst intellectual and moral paradoxes are too fondly clung to by another. It may go very much against the grain with him to see religion defended with weapons borrowed from the armoury of scepticism. Still, whatever may be his estimation of that which happens for the moment to be the "popular theology," if he believes, looking to the Church of England as it has been from the days of the Reformation to the present, and judging her from her Articles and Liturgy, and not from popular pulpits, that she is the truest representative, at this day, of pure and apostolical Christianity, it is certainly his duty to remain in the communion of that church.

CHAPTER III.

THE ATHANASIAN CREED.

“WHOSOEVER will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith ; which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.” Then follow a string of dogmatic propositions, setting forth, with much precision of language, the nature of the Holy Trinity, and of the union of the divine and human nature of Christ ; and this creed is wound up with the solemn reiteration, “This is the Catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.”

It has seemed good to the Church of England that these statements, in the form of a distinct asseveration of belief, should be recited by every congregation, on certain especially solemn occasions. We are told in the Articles that this creed “ought thoroughly to be received and believed ;” for it “may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.”

Now it undoubtedly may be that in this our church has acted wrongly. It is open to us, saving our allegiance to that church, to suppose that this is one of those cases, referred to in another article, in which particular churches have erred in matters of faith. If this be so, it is certain that the error is sufficiently important to make it highly desirable that it should be boldly reconsidered and rectified.

But, before concluding that the church is in error, it is only fitting that men should first carefully enquire whether there may not be some sense in which the terrible words of the Athanasian creed may not revolt the moral sense, and so tend to alienate men from the religion, but express some great and perhaps all-important truth.

There are various loose and illogical ways, various feeble compromises, by which men contrive to mitigate or evade the difficulty here referred to. Setting these aside as unimportant, it seems that the controversy lies, at the present day, between two constructions of this creed, each of which has its partisans.

Those who would understand the Athanasian creed in its "plain popular sense," would have us to believe that the Christian religion for the first time introduced into the world a new and very deadly crime called heterodoxy, which is punished by Almighty God with a severity such as is not surpassed, if equalled, in the case of any other offence whatever. The words "he cannot be saved" are taken to mean, that a man is destined to an eternity of wretchedness, in which he shall be incapable of restoration to God's favour, or to any approach to moral goodness, unless, within the few initial years of his sojourn upon earth, he shall have succeeded in attaining to a belief in certain dogmas, or propositions to be apprehended in the intellect. We are not even told whether this terrible penalty is contingent upon the man's having had the opportunity, during that period, of hearing those dogmas taught or even enunciated; although it is agreed that they are such as he could not possibly have acquired by the mere unaided use of his natural faculties.

It appears to be conceded—at any rate, conceded or no, the fact is certain—that the proposition, thus nakedly stated, is antagonistic to men's natural notions of human,

and consequently of divine, justice. It is maintained, however, that this antagonism is immaterial, because men's natural notions of justice are inadequate to measure God's justice as applied to men ; that which is just, as between a moral Governor of the Universe and his creatures, being such a thing as may, for aught we can tell, be something entirely different from any justice of which we can have a conception.

On this view it does not appear to be material, whether the act of faith which is to rescue a man from this danger shall be an act accompanied by intelligence, and resulting from a reasonable conviction. The safest and simplest way of attaining to it, on the contrary, is usually considered to be, by abstaining from rationalizing, by taking the creed as an act of faith, in childlike submission to the Church.

There is, indeed, a real danger in being either severely logical or very ardently interested in the welfare of the human race. In the one case it is not improbable that our reason, in the other that our feelings, may cause us to miss the intellectually narrow way of orthodoxy. We may, by rationalizing, fall into the mistake of supposing that this creed is contradictory to the primary instincts of our nature, and is consequently incredible ; or, by overmuch sympathizing with the seemingly hard lot of the millions who must perish from never having heard this Gospel preached to them, be led to revolt against, and to feel a certain indignation or scorn, according to our temperament, of that which may in such a mood appear to us an inappropriate culmination of the Gospel of glad tidings. In either case, by a singular perversion of that which appears to us justice, our very strength and fairness of intellect, or the most human of our feelings, may be the causes of our being "exiled for ever from Almighty God."

Indignation or scorn, however, would certainly be very much misplaced in such a controversy as the present. There are great difficulties on every side; and it is not to be supposed that a doctrine which for ages has satisfied the minds and consciences of the best and most enlightened men, and which in England at the present day is certainly the doctrine of the vast majority of devout Christians, has not something very strong to be said in its favour.

Still, a man who has approached Christianity in the manner set forth in the preceding pages can hardly fail to be convinced that it is impossible for him to accept as true this or any other doctrine which is plainly and strongly at variance with the primary beliefs of his nature. If the choice lies between accepting this and abstaining from communion with the Catholic Church, he must feel himself, however reluctantly, constrained to take the latter alternative. Happily, however, the Church of England by its own act relieves him, at any rate if he be a layman, from making this painful choice. He may, apparently, remain a member of the Church, and yet protest against these clauses in the Athanasian Creed, simply as not being true. He may deny that they are "to be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." If isolated texts be quoted against him, he may appeal from them to the general tenour and spirit of the Gospels. If the authority of the Church be cited, he may reply, as has been said, that Churches themselves are not exempt from error; and that the Catholic Church, in its true sense, is not the Church of the past alone, but also that of the future; in other words, that it is capable of growth and expansion from age to age.

Before proceeding even to this length, however, it is proper to consider the merits of another, comparatively

inoffensive, construction which has been put upon these passages in the creed of St. Athanasius.

Independently of any reference to a future life, the words above cited appear to have a meaning, and a very important meaning, with relation to the present. Whether any such secondary, if it be but secondary, meaning, was present to the mind of him who framed the Athanasian creed, or of those who first adopted it into the liturgy of the Catholic Church, or of those who, in drawing up our Articles, claimed for it acceptance from the members of the Church of England, are historical questions, interesting no doubt, but not of overwhelming importance at the present day. These are entirely beside the questions now before us, viz., whether there is not in these words a meaning which has no reference to future rewards or punishment, and whether that meaning is not a true one.

It appears to be agreed on all hands that "to be saved" means, in the language of theology, not simply to be relieved from the penalty, but also to be rescued from the condition, of sinfulness. If faith in the atonement produces for us the former, it does so by means of first producing the latter. Whether or no we receive the latter benefit, is, to a certain extent and with certain limitations, a matter within our own knowledge. The burthen of sin, the sense of a need for an emancipation from the tyranny of our own past, is a real and a tangible thing. If this be not so, then what has been written in the preceding chapters, by way of evolving a necessity for regeneration from the instincts of our nature, is totally undeserving of consideration. But, if it be so, then the being relieved from that burthen must likewise be a real and tangible thing; and each man for himself must at any given moment be able with some confidence to affirm that he is, or that he is not, relieved from that burthen. It seems hardly

possible to doubt that, whatever may be intended in these clauses with reference to the penalties for sin, they were intended likewise to, or at any rate they do, apply to the state of sin. It is impossible to believe that we can be rescued from sinfulness by some means which yet are inadequate to rescue us from the penalties of sin. The clauses must mean, then, that without such a faith as is there described it is not possible for men to be rescued from the burdensome sense of sin.

Is there, then, any sense in which this proposition is, or can be, true?

If it be intended to affirm that, before men can really feel that their sinfulness is purged away, they must with clear consciousness grasp and believe all these complex propositions concerning the divine nature and its union with the human nature in our Redeemer, then the affirmation appears to be plainly contradicted by experience. How was it, it may be asked, with the pious Christians and good churchmen who lived before the Athanasian creed was written? Can it, with any show of truth, be maintained that, when the only symbol of faith was the Apostles' Creed, every man who was saved from sin by the Christian religion consciously apprehended and believed all those dogmas which were not expressed in an articulate form till many ages later? And, at the present day, are there not many who experience the saving influence of the Christian religion, and yet do not acknowledge the truth of all that is contained in the Athanasian creed? It seems impossible to answer this question in the negative.

The case may be otherwise, however, if we put the question thus:—Must not every one, who is relieved from the burthen of sin by the regeneration rendered possible through faith in Christ, believe something which implicitly contains, and therefore must by strict logical rea-

soning be developed into, the clauses of the Athanasian creed?

If this be so, then it may perhaps be perfectly legitimate to affirm that a belief in those clauses is a necessary condition of salvation; not in the sense that the clauses must be distinctly apprehended by the intellect; nor that the man must acknowledge the connexion between that which he does believe and the clauses in the creed; but that, whether he knows it or not, and even though he may never so positively deny it, he does believe a truth which carries with it, by a logical necessity totally independent of his being aware of it, the beliefs set forth in those clauses.

Whether, in this limited sense, the “damnatory” clauses in the Athanasian creed may not convey a profound truth, is a question which is not lightly to be answered in the negative. It is a question which certainly cannot be answered demonstrably, either way, by *à priori* reasoning; for, the necessary conditions of man’s redemption may fairly be supposed to lie wholly beyond the range of such reasoning. For this reason, it does not appear competent to any man to pronounce that an affirmative answer to it would contradict the primary instincts of his nature.

The appeal, then, lies to experience. One who should attempt to vindicate these clauses against an objector, might very properly, supposing that objector to recognize in common with himself the leading doctrines of Christianity, or at any rate the doctrine of a redemption from sin through faith in Christ’s sacrifice, maintain his ground by some such reasoning as the following:—

How does the fact stand with yourself? he would ask. Have you not found that, when you began to reflect at all deeply upon this mystery of an atoning sacrifice, your mind was led, by a species of irresistible moral necessity, to recognize that the Redeemer and the Father must be one?

They must be One, in such a sense that there shall not have been one Being sitting aloof and suggesting or requiring a sacrifice, and another distinct Being offering and making the sacrifice. Should you not feel that such a conception would draw away your love and reverence from Him who required, and concentrate it upon Him who performed, that amazing act of divine love? That which overwhelms your mind with grateful adoration, is the spectacle of the King, whose majesty has been outraged, Himself taking the place of the offenders, and out of His great love to mankind condescending to suffer that they may be enabled to escape. Is it possible entirely to sever Christ from the Godhead, without destroying, or at any rate going far to destroy, the moral influence which this atonement exerts over your inner nature through its affections?

If, however, you feel constrained to acknowledge that the Redeemer and the Father are thus one, have you not grasped the central thought, so to speak, of the Athanasian creed? Is what remains of it anything more than the development of this thought, and the connecting it with what you already believe in other directions? You are taught to deny that the Saviour was a creature, other than, and consequently essentially inferior to, the Creator himself. You are taught to affirm, nevertheless, that He became "very man: of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting." This, again, you must necessarily believe, if you believe that Christ incarnate was not a phantom but a real historical person. If you do not believe this, can you really derive any spiritual benefit from the contemplation of his sacrifice? Does not the whole theology then become, in your genuine apprehension, a mere unmeaning figment, which is inoperative on your life? In other words, can you be "saved" by this faith unless you believe thus? And, if you accept these two truths, that Christ is

very God, and that He is very man, can you by any possibility bring these two beliefs into juxtaposition in your mind, without evolving conclusions identical, in substance, with the declarations of the Athanasian creed? I might go further in the same direction, with reference to the third person in the Holy Trinity; but this may suffice.

It is difficult to see how any sincere believer in the atonement could refuse to answer these questions affirmatively. When he has done so, he will have acknowledged himself to be conscious that, so far as he personally is concerned, the "damnatory" clauses in the Athanasian creed are true for him. He cannot, in this sense, be "saved," unless he holds the catholic faith, as defined in that creed.

This being so, can he have a right to affirm that it is incredible, because opposed to his primary instincts of moral justice, that that which he knows to be true for himself may likewise be true for the remainder of the human race? If the limitation here spoken of is unjust for the race, how can it be just that he himself should be subject to it? The latter, however, he finds to be a truth; consequently it must be just; for he is supposed to put faith in the justice of Almighty God.

These considerations may at any rate serve to mitigate our repugnance to these clauses in the creed. They announce as true for the human race, it appears, that which each of us discovers to be true for himself. They proclaim truths which are not so distinctly and unequivocally enunciated in either of the other creeds; and truths which it can hardly be thought unnecessary to proclaim, when it is considered that, in spite of the existence of this creed, the tendency of popular theology, perhaps always, certainly at the present day, is to "divide the substance" of Father and Son,—to cloud and distort the catholic faith, to introduce perplexing moral problems, and thereby to foster

infidelity, by this very neglect of the plain teaching of the Athanasian creed.

Still, whilst recognizing the importance of maintaining the doctrinal portions of the Athanasian creed in their fullness, and whilst maintaining that there is a sense in which even the "damnatory clauses" may with no great violence to them be read so as to be not only inoffensive but very profitable, it must, I think, be acknowledged that the propriety of continuing the employment of these clauses in the general services of the church is very questionable. They are exceedingly liable to be, I will not say misunderstood, but taken coarsely in their popular sense. And this danger is much augmented by the presence in the same creed of another passage, which, it can hardly be denied, seems to furnish a reasonable warrant, from one point of view, for holding them in this sense. I refer to that passage which implies a perpetual fixity in the condition of the soul at the moment of death, or at any rate at the day of judgment, in saying "they that have done evil shall go into everlasting fire."

On the mysterious and awful subject of the eternity of future punishment, it appears wise to maintain a certain reserve. There is little, beyond doubtful analogies, or inferences from expressions which seem to be more or less metaphorical, from which we can trace in the New Testament a conclusion one way or the other. The Church of England may be said to have abstained from dogmatizing in it, so far as this may be inferred from the expunging of an article, which had been prepared with that object. What we may be certain of is that, whatever be the future destiny of the souls, whether of the righteous or the unrighteous, will be that which is most consonant to the justice and the goodness of Almighty God. With that assurance we may well rest content, not seeking to lift the

veil which He, in His wisdom, has thought fit to leave there. If we must dogmatize, surely, whether or no it be the more orthodox, it seems to be the more blameless and human course that we should dogmatize on the side of mercy. Were we not somewhat blinded by party or theological zeal, it would be thought incredible that a violent outcry should have been raised, and an attempt made to remove one or two otherwise inoffensive clergymen from their benefices, because they ventured to express a hope that mercy might be extended, after death, through some healing agency unknown to us, to souls which had passed out of the world guilty and impenitent.

I feel, however, that I have been somewhat too far trespassing in the fields of theology. What I proposed to myself at the outset was simply to consider how far I myself was honest, firmly holding the doctrine of "primary beliefs" as here set forth, in likewise holding fast to the membership of the Church of England. This question took a general shape; for it was one that concerned me no otherwise than as it concerns every one who should accept the truth of the same philosophy. Still, personal or general, the question was a very important one. I found that the compatibility of the two adhesions depended on the question whether the general teaching of the Church of England was or was not consistent with the primary moral and intellectual instincts of human nature. That which has always been supposed to be the strongest instance of the divergence of reason and faith—the creed of Athanasius—thus became the crucial instance with reference to which this consistency was to be tested. It is in this connexion, and for this purpose, solely, that I have entered upon an examination of this creed. The result appears to be, that, whilst in some respects we may strongly regret portions of its language, the creed itself does not appear

to be so plainly and violently opposed to the moral instincts of the human mind as to force upon us the choice between two extreme courses,—either to renounce the philosophy as disproved by the teaching of the church, or to renounce the church, as a teacher of that which is demonstrably false, as contradictory to the foundations of all human knowledge. This, and this alone, was the question which I proposed to myself at the outset for examination.

In closing this volume, therefore, I have now only to add that I am conscious of some presumption in having undertaken such a task, and of much imperfection in the performance of it. The occupation has been useful to myself, in clearing, by the mere process of systematic writing, much that was obscure and confused in my mind when I began. If it proves of no use to others, it will speedily perish out of sight and be forgotten, and so do no harm. If its conclusions are erroneous, it is possible that some one may take the trouble to refute them, and so, by discussion, the cause of truth may be advanced. In any case, it is not easy for a writer, who does not seek to inflame popular passions or prejudices, but appeals solely to the reason, to do much mischief.

THE END.

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